

# Finding Collisions in Interactive Protocols – A Tight Lower Bound on the Round Complexity of Statistically-Hiding Commitments

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## Abstract

We study the round complexity of various cryptographic protocols. Our main result is a tight lower bound on the round complexity of any fully-black-box construction of a statistically-hiding commitment scheme from one-way permutations, and even from trapdoor permutations. This lower bound matches the round complexity of the statistically-hiding commitment scheme due to Naor, Ostrovsky, Venkatesan and Yung (CRYPTO '92). As a corollary, we derive similar tight lower bounds for several other cryptographic protocols, such as *single-server private information retrieval*, *interactive hashing*, and *oblivious transfer* that guarantees statistical security for one of the parties.

Our techniques extend the collision-finding oracle due to Simon (EUROCRYPT '98) to the setting of interactive protocols (our extension also implies an alternative proof for the main property of the original oracle). In addition, we substantially extend the reconstruction paradigm of Gennaro and Trevisan (FOCS '00). In both cases, our extensions are quite delicate and may be found useful in proving additional black-box separation results.

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# 1 Introduction

Research in the foundations of cryptography is concerned with the construction of provably secure cryptographic tools. The security of such constructions relies on a growing number of computational assumptions, and in the last few decades much research has been devoted to demonstrating the feasibility of particular cryptographic tasks based on the weakest possible assumptions. For example, the existence of one-way functions has been shown to be equivalent to the existence of pseudorandom functions and permutations [22, 45], pseudorandom generators [3, 33], universal one-way hash functions and signature schemes [49, 54], different types of commitment schemes [32, 46], private-key encryption [21] and other primitives.

Many constructions based on minimal assumptions, however, result in only a theoretical impact due to their inefficiency, and in practice more efficient constructions based on seemingly stronger assumptions are being used. Thus, identifying tradeoffs between the *efficiency* of cryptographic constructions and the strength of the computational assumptions on which they rely is essential in order to obtain a better understanding of the relationship between cryptographic tasks and computational assumptions.

In this paper we follow this line of research, and study the tradeoffs between the *round complexity* of cryptographic protocols and the strength of their underlying computational assumptions. We provide a lower bound on the round complexity of black-box constructions of statistically-hiding and computationally-binding commitment schemes (for short, statistical commitment schemes) based on one-way permutations and on families of trapdoor permutations. Our lower bound matches known upper bounds resulting from [47]. As a corollary of our main result, we derive similar tight lower bounds for several other cryptographic protocols, such as *single-server private information retrieval*, *interactive hashing*, and *oblivious transfer* that guarantees statistical security for one of the parties.

Although in the current paper our techniques are used to derive lower bounds for a particular efficiency measure, namely that of the round complexity of cryptographic protocols, they may be found useful in proving additional black-box separation results. In the following paragraphs, we discuss the notion of statistically-hiding commitment schemes and describe the setting in which our lower bounds are proved.

**Statistically-hiding commitment schemes.** A commitment scheme defines a two-stage interactive protocol between a sender  $\mathcal{S}$  and a receiver  $\mathcal{R}$ ; informally, after the *commit stage*,  $\mathcal{S}$  is bound to (at most) one value, which stays hidden from  $\mathcal{R}$ , and in the *reveal stage*  $\mathcal{R}$  learns this value. The two security properties hinted at in this informal description are known as *binding* ( $\mathcal{S}$  is bound to at most one value after the commit stage) and *hiding* ( $\mathcal{R}$  does not learn the value to which  $\mathcal{S}$  commits before the reveal stage). In a statistical commitment scheme the hiding property holds *even against all-powerful receivers* (i.e., the hiding holds information-theoretically), while the binding property is required to hold only for polynomially-bounded senders.

Statistical commitments can be used as a building block in constructions of statistical zero-knowledge arguments [5, 47] and of certain coin-tossing protocols [42]. When used within protocols in which certain commitments are never revealed, statistical commitments have the following advantage over computationally-hiding commitment schemes: in such a scenario, it should be infeasible to violate the binding property *only during the execution of the protocol*, whereas the committed values will remain hidden *forever* (i.e., regardless of how much time the receiver invests after the completion of the protocol).

Statistical commitments schemes with a constant number of rounds were shown to exist based on specific number-theoretic assumptions [4, 5] (or, more generally, based on any collection of claw-free permutations [26] with an efficiently-recognizable index set [23]), and collision-resistant

hash functions [10, 49]. Protocols with higher round complexity were shown to exist based on different types of one way functions. Protocols with  $O(\frac{n}{\log n})$  rounds (where  $n$  is the input length of the underlying function) were based on one-way permutations [47] and (known-) regular one-way functions [30].<sup>1</sup> Finally, a protocol with a polynomial number of rounds was based on any one-way function [32].

**Black-box reductions.** As already mentioned, we are interested in proving lower bounds on the round complexity of various cryptographic constructions. In particular, we are interested in showing that any construction of statistical commitments based on trapdoor permutations requires a fairly large number of rounds. Nevertheless, under standard assumptions such as the existence of collision-resistant hash functions, *constant-round statistical commitments do exist*. So if these assumptions hold, then the existence of trapdoor permutations implies the existence of constant-round statistical commitments in a *trivial logical sense*. Faced with similar difficulties, Impagliazzo and Rudich [35] presented a paradigm for proving impossibility results under a restricted, yet important, subclass of reductions called *black-box reductions*. Their method was extended to showing lower bounds on the *efficiency* of reductions by Kim, Simon and Tetali [38].

Intuitively, a black-box reduction of a primitive  $P$  to a primitive  $Q$  is a construction of  $P$  out of  $Q$  that ignores the internal structure of the implementation of  $Q$  and just uses it as a “subroutine” (i.e., as a black-box). In addition, in the case of fully-black-box reductions, the proof of security (showing that an adversary that breaks the implementation of  $P$  implies an adversary that breaks the implementation of  $Q$ ), is also black-box (i.e., the internal structure of the adversary that breaks the implementation of  $P$  is ignored as well). For a more exact treatment of black-box reductions see Section 2.3.

## 1.1 Related Work

Impagliazzo and Rudich [35] showed that there are no black-box reductions of key-agreement protocols to one-way permutations and substantial additional work in this line followed (c.f. [18, 56, 58]). Kim, Simon and Tetali [38] initiated a new line of impossibility results, by providing a lower bound on the *efficiency* of black-box reductions (rather than on their feasibility). They proved a lower bound on the efficiency, in terms of the number of calls to the underlying primitive, of any black-box reduction of universal one-way hash functions to one-way permutations. This result was later improved, to match the known upper bound, by Gennaro et al. [16], which also provided tight lower bounds on the efficiency of several other black-box reductions [14, 15, 16]. Building upon the technique developed by [16], Horvitz and Katz [34] gave lower bounds on the efficiency of black-box reductions of statistically-binding commitments to one-way permutations. In all the above results the measure of efficiency under consideration is the number of calls to the underlying primitives.

With respect to the round complexity of statistical commitments, Fischlin [13] showed that every black-box reduction of statistical commitments to trapdoor permutations, has at least two rounds. His result follows Simon’s oracle separation of collision-resistant hash functions from one-way permutations [58]. Recently, Wee [59] considered a restricted class of black-box reductions of statistical commitments to one-way permutations. Informally, Wee considered only constructions in which the sender first queries the one-way permutation on several independent inputs. Once the interaction with the receiver starts, the sender only access the outputs of these queries (and not the inputs) and does not perform any additional queries. Wee showed that every black-box reduction of the above class has  $\Omega(\frac{n}{\log n})$  communication rounds.

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<sup>1</sup>The original presentations of the above protocols have  $O(n)$  rounds. By a natural extension, however, the number of rounds in these protocols can be reduced to  $O(\frac{n}{\log n})$ , see [31, 39].

The question of deriving lower bounds on the round complexity of black-box reductions, was also addressed in the context of zero-knowledge protocols [7, 11, 24, 27, 37, 55]. In this context, however, the black-box access is to the, possibly cheating, verifier and not to any underlying primitive.

## 1.2 Our Results

We study the class of fully-black-box constructions of statistically-hiding commitment schemes from trapdoor permutations, and prove a lower bound on the round complexity of any such construction. Informally, our main theorem is as follows:

**Main Theorem (Informal).** *Any fully-black-box construction of a statistically-hiding commitment scheme from a family of trapdoor permutations over  $\{0, 1\}^n$  has  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  communication rounds.*

In fact, we consider a more general notion of hardness for trapdoor permutations, which extends the standard polynomial hardness requirement. Informally, we say that a trapdoor permutation  $\tau$  over  $\{0, 1\}^n$  is  $s(n)$ -hard if any probabilistic Turing-machine that runs in time  $s(n)$  inverts  $\tau$  on a uniformly chosen image with probability at most  $1/s(n)$ . Given this definition, we show that any fully-black-box construction of a statistically-hiding commitment scheme from a family of  $s(n)$ -hard trapdoor permutations over  $\{0, 1\}^n$  requires  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log s(n)}\right)$  communication rounds.

Our lower bound, for both notions of trapdoor permutations, matches the known upper bound due to [47, 31, 39]. The scheme of Naor et al. relies on one-way permutations in a fully-black-box manner, and thus we demonstrate that their scheme is essentially optimal with respect to the number of communication rounds. Moreover, our lower bound implies that trapdoor permutations are not superior to one-way permutations in this setting, whereas collision-resistant hash functions and specific number-theoretic assumptions are superior and imply schemes with a constant number of rounds.

**Taking the security of the reduction into account.** Note that the informal statement of our main theorem considers constructions which invoke only trapdoor permutations over  $n$  bits. We would like to extend the result to consider constructions which may invoke the trapdoor permutations over more than a single domain. However, in this case, better upper bounds are known. In particular, given security parameter  $1^n$  it is possible to apply the scheme of Naor et al. using a one-way permutation over  $n^\epsilon$  bits. This implies statistical commitments that run in  $O(n^\epsilon)$  rounds. This subtle issue is not unique to our setting, and in fact arises in any study of the efficiency of cryptographic reductions (see, in particular, [16, 59]). The common approach for addressing this issue is by restricting the class of constructions (as in the informal statement of our main theorem above). In Section 6 we follow a less restrictive approach: we consider constructions which are given access to trapdoor permutations over *any* domain size, but require that the proof of security will be “somewhat security preserving”. More specifically, we consider an additional parameter, which we refer to as the *security-parameter-expansion* of the construction. Informally, the proof of security in a fully-black-box construction gives a way to translate (in a black-box manner) an adversary  $S^*$  that breaks the binding of the commitment scheme into an adversary  $A$  that breaks the security of the trapdoor permutation. Such a construction is  $\ell(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding if whenever the machine  $A$  tries to invert a permutation over  $n$  bits, it invokes  $S^*$  on security parameters which are at most  $1^{\ell(n)}$ . It should be noted that any construction in which  $\ell(n)$  is significantly larger than  $n$ , may only be weakly security preserving (for a taxonomy of security preserving reductions see [44, Lecture 2]).

Our lower bound proof takes into consideration the security parameter expansion, and therefore our statements apply for the most general form of fully-black-box reductions. In particular, in case that  $\ell(n) = O(n)$ , our theorem implies that the required number of rounds is  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$ , and in the general case (where  $\ell(n)$  may be any polynomial in  $n$ ), our theorem implies that the required number of rounds is  $n^{\Omega(1)}$  (which as argued above is tight as well).

**Implications to other cryptographic protocols.** Our main result can be extended to any cryptographic protocol which implies statistically-hiding commitment schemes in a fully-black-box manner, as long as the reduction essentially preserves the number of communication rounds. Specifically, we derive similar  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  lower bounds on the round complexity of fully-black-box constructions from trapdoor permutations of single-server private information retrieval, interactive hashing, and oblivious transfer that guarantees statistical security for one of the parties.

**Subsequent work.** Among the above implications to other cryptographic protocols, of particular interest is single-server private information retrieval and whether this can be extended to a better lower bound on the communication complexity. In a subsequent work [29], we derive an *asymptotically linear* lower bound on the communication complexity of any fully-black-box construction of a single-server private information retrieval protocol from a family of trapdoor permutations. This matches, up to a constant factor, the  $n - o(n)$  upper bound of Kushilevitz and Ostrovsky [41] (which relies on trapdoor permutations in a fully-black-box manner), and provides evidence that private information retrieval with sublinear communication requires either stronger assumptions than trapdoor permutations, or more than a single server.

### 1.3 Overview of the Technique

For the sake of simplicity, we concentrate in this overview on the impossibility result of  $o\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$ -round statistical commitment based on one-way permutations (the lower bound for constructions based on families of trapdoor permutations follows similar ideas). We also assume without loss of generality that the sender's secret in the commitment protocol is a single uniform bit. Let us start by considering Simon's oracle [58] for ruling out any black-box reduction of a family of collision resistant hash functions to one-way permutation.

**Simon's oracle.** Simon's oracle ColFinder gets as an input a circuit  $C$ , possibly with  $\pi$  gates,<sup>2</sup> where  $\pi$  is a random permutation. It then outputs two random elements  $w_1$  and  $w_2$  such that  $C(w_1) = C(w_2)$ . Clearly, in the presence of ColFinder no family of collision resistant hash functions exists (the adversary simply queries ColFinder with the hash function circuit to find a collision). In order to rule out the existence, in the presence of ColFinder, of any two-round statistical commitment scheme, Fischlin [13] used the following adversary  $\mathcal{S}^*$  to break any such scheme: assume w.l.o.g. that the first message,  $q_1$  is sent by  $\mathcal{R}$  and consider the circuit  $C_{q_1}$ , naturally defined by  $q_1$  and  $\mathcal{S}$ . Namely,  $C_{q_1}$  gets as an input the random coins of  $\mathcal{S}$  and outputs the answer that  $\mathcal{S}$  replies on receiving the message  $q_1$  from  $\mathcal{R}$ . In the commit stage after receiving the message  $q_1$ , the cheating  $\mathcal{S}^*$  constructs  $C_{q_1}$ , queries ColFinder( $C_{q_1}$ ) to get  $w_1$  and  $w_2$ , and answers as  $\mathcal{S}(w_1)$  would (i.e., by  $C_{q_1}(w_1)$ ). In the reveal stage,  $\mathcal{S}^*$  uses both  $w_1$  and  $w_2$  to open the commitment (i.e. once using the random coins  $w_1$  and then using  $w_2$ ). Since the protocol is statistically hiding, the set of the sender's random coins that are consistent with this commit stage transcript is divided to almost

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<sup>2</sup>In fact, ColFinder also accepts circuits  $C$  with ColFinder gates. For the sake of this discussion, we ignore this property.

equal size parts by the values of their secret bits. Therefore, with probability roughly half  $w_1$  and  $w_2$  will differ on the value of  $\mathcal{S}$ 's secret bit and the binding of the commitment will be violated.

In order to obtain the black-box impossibility results (both of [58] and of [13]), it is left to show that  $\pi$  is one-way in the presence of ColFinder. Let  $A$  be a circuit trying to invert  $\pi$  on a random  $y \in \{0, 1\}^n$  using ColFinder, and let's assume for now that  $A$  makes only a single call to ColFinder. Intuitively, the way we could hope this query to ColFinder with input  $C$  could help is by “hitting”  $y$  in the following sense: we say that ColFinder *hits*  $y$  on input  $C$ , if the computations of  $C(w_1)$  or of  $C(w_2)$  query  $\pi$  on  $\pi^{-1}(y)$ . Now we note that for every input circuit  $C$  each one of  $w_1$  and  $w_2$  (the outputs of ColFinder on  $C$ ) is *individually* uniform. Therefore, the probability that ColFinder hits  $y$  on input  $C$ , may only be larger by a factor two than the probability that evaluating  $C$  on a uniform  $w$  queries  $\pi$  on  $\pi^{-1}(y)$ . In other words,  $A$  does not gain much by querying ColFinder (as  $A$  can evaluate  $C$  on a uniform  $w$  on its own). Formalizing the above intuition is far from easy, mainly when we consider  $A$  that queries ColFinder more than once. The difficulty lies in formalizing the claim that the only useful queries are the ones in which ColFinder hits  $y$  (after all, the reply to a query may give us some useful global information on  $\pi$ ). We give some intuition in Section 1.3.1 for why this claim is valid, following a different approach than the original proof due to [58] (our version of the proof extends the reconstruction technique of Gennaro and Trevisan).

**Finding collisions in interactive protocols.** We would like to employ Simon's oracle for breaking the binding of more interactive protocols (with more than two rounds). Unfortunately, the “natural” attempts to do so seem to fail miserably. The first attempt that comes to mind might be the following: In the commit stage  $\mathcal{S}^*$  follows the protocol and let  $q_1, \dots, q_k$  be the messages that  $\mathcal{R}$  sent in this stage. In the reveal stage,  $\mathcal{S}^*$  queries ColFinder to get a colliding pair  $(w_1, w_2)$  in  $C_{q_1, \dots, q_k}$  - the circuit naturally defined by the code of  $\mathcal{S}$  and  $q_1, \dots, q_k$  (i.e.,  $C_{q_1, \dots, q_k}$  gets as an input the random coins of  $\mathcal{S}$  and outputs the messages sent by  $\mathcal{S}$  when  $\mathcal{R}$ 's messages are  $q_1, \dots, q_k$ ). The problem is that it is very unlikely that the outputs of Sam on  $C_{q_1, \dots, q_k}$  will be consistent with the answers that  $\mathcal{S}^*$  *already* gave in the commit stage (we did not encounter this problem when breaking two-round protocols, since  $\mathcal{S}^*$  could query ColFinder on  $C_{q_1}$  before  $\mathcal{S}^*$  sends its first and only message). Alternatively, we could change ColFinder such that it gets as an additional input  $w_1$  and returns  $w_2$  for which  $C_{q_1, \dots, q_k}(w_1) = C_{q_1, \dots, q_k}(w_2)$  (that is, the new ColFinder finds second preimages rather than collisions). Indeed, this new ColFinder does imply the breaking of any commitment scheme, but it also implies the inversion of  $\pi$ .<sup>3</sup> We should not be too surprised that both the above attempts failed as they are both completely oblivious of the round complexity of  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R})$ . Since one-way permutations *do imply* statistical commitments in a black-box manner any oracle that breaks statistical commitments could also be used to break the underlying one-way permutations.<sup>4</sup>

For our oracle separation, we manage to extend Simon's oracle to the setting of interactive protocols. We will have to handle interaction with care so that our oracle is not too strong (so that it does not break the one-way permutations), but still strong enough to be useful. In fact, the more interactive our oracle will be the more powerful it will be, and eventually it will allow breaking the one-way permutations. Quantifying this growth in power is how we get our tight bounds on the round complexity of the reduction.

<sup>3</sup>Consider a circuit  $C$ , whose input is composed of a bit  $\sigma$  and an  $n$ -bit string  $w$ . The circuit  $C$  is defined by  $C(0, w) = \pi(w)$  and  $C(1, w) = w$ . Thus, in order to compute  $\pi^{-1}(y)$  we can simply invoke the new ColFinder on input  $C$  and  $w_1 = (1, y)$ . With probability half ColFinder will return  $w_2 = (0, \pi^{-1}(y))$ .

<sup>4</sup>In addition, in both these naive attempts the cheating sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  follows the commit stage honestly (as  $\mathcal{S}$  would). It is not hard to come up with two-round protocol that works well for semi-honest commit stage senders (consider for instance the two-round variant of [47] where the receiver's queries are all sent in the first round).



**Our oracle.** It will be useful for us to view Simon’s oracle as performing two sampling tasks: First it samples  $w_1$  uniformly and then it samples a second preimage  $w_2$  such that  $C(w_1) = C(w_2)$ . As explained above, an oracle for sampling a second preimage allows inverting the one-way permutations. The reason the sampling done by ColFinder is not too damaging is that  $w_1$  was chosen by ColFinder after  $C$  is already given. Therefore, an adversary  $A$  is very limited in setting up the second distribution from which ColFinder samples (i.e. the uniform distribution over the preimages of  $C(w_1)$  under  $C$ ). In other words, this distribution is jointly defined by  $A$  and ColFinder itself.

Extending the above interpretation of ColFinder (and ignoring various technical aspects), our separation oracle Sam is defined as follows: Sam will be given as input a query  $Q = (C_{\text{next}}, C, z)$ , and will output a pair  $(w', z')$  where  $w'$  is a uniformly distributed preimage of  $z$  under the mapping defined by the circuit  $C$ , and  $z' = C_{\text{next}}(w')$ . Following the intuition above we impose the restriction that there was a previous query  $(C, \cdot, \cdot)$  that was answered by  $(w, z)$  (note that this imposes a forest-like structure on the queries). In other words,  $C$  was announced before  $w$  was chosen by Sam in answering the previous query.<sup>5</sup> In addition, we only allow querying Sam up to depth  $d(n) + 1$  where  $n$  is the security parameter (this depth function  $d(\cdot)$  will depend on the particular lower bound we will try to prove).

**Sam allows breaking  $d(n)$ -round statistical commitments.** The adversary  $\mathcal{S}^*$  operates as follows: after getting the first message  $q_1$ , it constructs  $C_{q_1}$  (the circuit that computes  $\mathcal{S}$ ’s first message) and queries Sam for a random input  $w_1$  (i.e., it queries Sam without specifying  $C$  and  $z$ ), and sends  $\mathcal{R}$  the message specified by  $z_1 = C_{q_1}(w_1)$ . On getting the  $i$ -th receiver message  $q_i$ , the adversary  $\mathcal{S}^*$  constructs  $C_{q_1, \dots, q_i}$  (the circuit that computes  $\mathcal{S}$ ’s first  $i$  messages), queries Sam on  $(C_{q_1, \dots, q_i}, C_{q_1, \dots, q_{i-1}}, z_{i-1})$  to get  $(w_i, z_i)$ , and replies to  $\mathcal{R}$  with the message specified by  $z_i = C_{q_1, \dots, q_i}(w_i)$ . Finally, after Completing the commit stage (when answering the last receiver message  $q_d$ ) it queries Sam on  $(\perp, C_{q_1, \dots, q_d}, z_d)$  to get  $w_{d+1}, z_{d+1}$ . Both  $w_d$  and  $w_{d+1}$  are sender’s random inputs that are consistent with the commit-stage transcript. Therefore, with probability roughly half they can be used to break the binding of the protocol.

**Sam cannot be used to invert random permutations.** To complete our impossibility result, it is left to prove that Sam cannot be used to invert the random permutation  $\pi$ . As in our intuition for Simon’s oracle, we would like to claim that the only useful Sam-queries for an adversary  $A$  that tries to invert  $\pi$  on  $y$  are queries that make Sam hit  $y$ . Assume Sam is given as input a query  $(C_{\text{next}}, C, z)$ , and outputs a pair  $(w', z')$ . We say that Sam hits  $y$  if evaluating  $C(w')$  queries  $\pi$  on  $\pi^{-1}(y)$ . Extending the reconstruction technique of Gennaro and Trevisan, we show that  $A$  is unlikely to invert  $\pi$  on  $y$  if it does not make Sam hit  $y$  (see Section 1.3.1).

The most technical part of the paper is showing that a circuit  $A$  that inverts  $\pi$  on  $y$  while making Sam hit  $y$  can be transformed into a circuit  $M$  that inverts  $\pi$  without Sam hitting  $y$ . This aspect of the proof is somewhat influenced by the work of Wee [59]. Let us try to give some intuition for this claim. Assume for simplicity of notation that  $A$  only makes the following queries:  $(C_1, \perp, \perp), (C_2, C_1, z_1), \dots, (C_{d+1}, C_d, z_d)$  and it receives the corresponding replies:  $(w_1, z_1), \dots, (w_{d+1}, z_{d+1})$ . We know that for some  $i$  the probability that the computation  $C_i(w_{i+1})$  queries  $\pi$  on  $\pi^{-1}(y)$  (i.e., hits  $y$ ) is non-negligible (as we know that Sam is likely to hit  $y$ ). On the other hand the probability that  $C_1(w_2)$  hits  $y$  (which is identical to the probability that  $C_1(w_1)$  hits  $y$ ) is exponentially small. Therefore, unless  $d = \Omega(\frac{n}{\log n})$  we have that there exists a location  $i$  such that the probability  $C_i(w_{i+1})$  hits  $y$  is larger than the probability that  $C_{i-1}(w_i)$  hits  $y$  by a very

<sup>5</sup>An additional important restriction that we will not discuss here is that  $C_{\text{next}}$  is a *refinement* of the circuit  $C$ , where by refinement we mean that  $C_{\text{next}}(w) = (C(w), \tilde{C}(w))$  for some circuit  $\tilde{C}$  and for every  $w$ .

large polynomial. We are also able to show (under the various restrictions on **Sam**) that the probability that the computation  $C_i(w_i)$  hits  $y$  is unlikely to be much smaller than the probability that the computation  $C_i(w_{i+1})$  hits  $y$ . Combining the above understandings we design  $M$  that inverts  $\pi$  on  $y$  with non-negligible probability without making **Sam** hit  $y$  (and this will constitute a contradiction).  $M$  simulates  $A$  but in addition, whenever  $A$  queries **Sam** for  $(C_{i+1}, C_i, z_i)$  and receives a reply  $(w_{i+1}, z_{i+1})$  we let  $M$  also evaluate  $C_{i+1}(w_{i+1})$ . If this computation queries  $\pi$  on  $\pi^{-1}(y)$  then  $M$  halts and outputs  $\pi^{-1}(y)$ . Otherwise,  $M$  continues with the simulation of  $A$ . We argue that with sufficiently large probability, if the first query of  $A$  that makes **Sam** hit  $y$  is  $(C_{i+1}, C_i, z_i)$ , then  $M$ 's computation of  $C_i(w_i)$  queries  $\pi$  on  $\pi^{-1}(y)$ . Therefore,  $M$  retrieves  $\pi^{-1}(y)$  before making the hitting query.

### 1.3.1 Extending Gennaro and Trevisan's reconstruction lemma

Gennaro and Trevisan [16] presented a very elegant argument for proving that a random permutation is hard to invert also for non-uniform adversaries (previous proofs, e.g. [35], only ruled out uniform adversaries). Let  $A$  be a circuit and let  $\pi$  be a permutation that  $A$  inverts on a non-negligible fraction of its outputs. What Gennaro and Trevisan showed is that relative to  $A$  the permutation  $\pi$  has a relatively short description. Therefore, by a counting argument, there is only a tiny fraction of permutations which  $A$  inverts well. Intuitively,  $A$  saves on the description of  $\pi$  as it allows us to reconstruct  $\pi$  on (many of) the  $x$ 's for which  $A^\pi(\pi(x)) = x$ . The formal proof strongly relies on a bound on the number of  $\pi$  gates in  $A$ : when we use  $A$  to reconstruct  $\pi$  on  $x$  we need all the  $\pi$ -queries made by  $A^\pi(\pi(x))$  (apart perhaps of the query for  $\pi(x)$  itself) to already be reconstructed.

In our setting, we would like to consider an adversary  $A^{\text{Sam}}(y)$  that (many times) inverts  $y$  without making **Sam** produce a  $y$ -hit. Recall that the oracle **Sam** is given as an input a circuit  $C$  with  $\pi$ -gates and has to produce a random inverse of some value  $z$  under the mapping defined by  $C$ . We would like to apply the argument of [16] to claim that relative to  $A$  and **Sam** there is a short description of  $\pi$ . However, we are faced with a substantial obstacle as the simulation of **Sam** requires making a huge amount of  $\pi$  queries.<sup>6</sup> Overcoming this obstacle requires much care both in the definition and analysis of **Sam**. We defer more details to Section 5.3.

## 1.4 Paper Organization

In Section 2, we briefly present the notations and formal definitions used in this paper and in Section 3 we describe the oracle that is used to derive our results. In Section 4, we show that this oracle can be used to break the security of statistical-hiding commitment schemes, and in Section 5 we show that every circuit which tries to invert a random permutation using this oracle (under some restrictions), fails with high probability. In Section 6, we combine the results of Sections 4 and 5, and derive our lower bound result. Finally, Section 7 discusses the implications of the result to other cryptographic protocols.

## 2 Preliminaries

We denote by  $\Pi_n$  the set of all permutations over  $\{0, 1\}^n$ . For a finite set  $X$ , we denote by  $x \leftarrow X$  the experiment of choosing an element of  $X$  according to the uniform distribution. Similarly, for a distribution  $\mathcal{D}$  over a set  $X$ , we denote by  $x \leftarrow \mathcal{D}$  the experiment of choosing an element of  $X$

<sup>6</sup>Consider for example  $C$  such that on input  $w$  it truncates the last bit of  $\pi(w)$  and outputs the result. Finding collisions in  $C$  requires knowledge of  $\pi$  almost entirely.



according to the distribution  $\mathcal{D}$ . The statistical distance between two distributions  $X$  and  $Y$  over  $\Omega$  is denoted  $\text{SD}(X, Y)$ , and defined as

$$\text{SD}(X, Y) = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{\omega \in \Omega} |\Pr_X[\omega] - \Pr_Y[\omega]| .$$

The following standard fact (see, for example [57, Fact 2.6]) will be useful for us in analyzing statistically-close distributions.

**Fact 2.1.** *If  $X$  and  $Y$  are two distributions such that  $\text{SD}(X, Y) < \epsilon$ , then with probability at least  $1 - 2\sqrt{\epsilon}$  over  $x \leftarrow X$  it holds that*

$$(1 - \sqrt{\epsilon}) \cdot \Pr[X = x] < \Pr[Y = x] < (1 + \sqrt{\epsilon}) \cdot \Pr[X = x] .$$

## 2.1 One-Way Permutations and Trapdoor Permutations

We briefly present the notions of one-way permutations and trapdoor (one-way) permutations which are used in this paper. For a more comprehensive discussion we refer the reader to [19].

**Definition 2.2.** A collection of permutations  $\pi = \{\pi_n\}_{n=1}^{\infty}$ , where  $\pi_n \in \Pi_n$  for every  $n$ , is  $s(n)$ -hard if for every probabilistic Turing-machine  $A$  that runs in time  $s(n)$ , and for all sufficiently large  $n$ ,

$$\Pr[A(1^n, y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y)] \leq \frac{1}{s(n)} ,$$

where the probability is taken uniformly over all the possible choices of  $y \in \{0, 1\}^n$  and over all the possible outcomes of the internal coin tosses of  $A$ .

In our setting, whenever such a collection  $\pi$  is given as an oracle, we denote by  $A^\pi$  a circuit or a Turing-machine  $A$  with oracle access to  $\pi$ . In addition, when we consider the probability of an event over the choice of  $\pi$ , we mean that for every integer  $n$ , a permutation  $\pi_n$  is chosen uniformly at random from  $\Pi_n$  and independently of all other permutations.

A collection of trapdoor permutations is represented as a triplet  $\tau = (G, F, F^{-1})$ . Informally,  $G$  corresponds to a key generation procedure, which is queried on a string  $td$  (intended as the “trapdoor”) and produces a corresponding public key  $pk$ . The procedure  $F$  is the actual permutation, which is queried on a public key  $pk$  and an input  $x$ . Finally, the procedure  $F^{-1}$  is the inverse of  $F$ : If  $G(td) = pk$  and  $F(pk, x) = y$ , then  $F^{-1}(td, y) = x$ . In this paper, since we are concerned with providing a lower bound, we do not consider the most general definition of a collection of trapdoor permutations. Instead, we denote by  $T_n$  the set of all triplets  $\tau_n = (G_n, F_n, F_n^{-1})$  of the following form:

1.  $G_n \in \Pi_n$ .
2.  $F_n : \{0, 1\}^n \times \{0, 1\}^n \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^n$  is a function such that  $F_n(pk, \cdot) \in \Pi_n$  for every  $pk \in \{0, 1\}^n$ .
3.  $F_n^{-1} : \{0, 1\}^n \times \{0, 1\}^n \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^n$  is a function such that  $F_n^{-1}(td, y)$  returns the unique  $x \in \{0, 1\}^n$  for which  $F_n(G_n(td), x) = y$ .

Our lower bound proof is based on analyzing random instances of such collections. A uniformly distributed  $\tau_n \in T_n$  can be chosen as follows:  $G_n$  is chosen uniformly at random from  $\Pi_n$ , and for each  $pk \in \{0, 1\}^n$  a permutation  $F_n(pk, \cdot)$  is chosen uniformly and independently at random from  $\Pi_n$ . As above, we do not consider a single collection  $\tau_n$ : we consider a family  $\tau = \{\tau_n\}_{n=1}^{\infty}$  of

collection of trapdoor permutations where  $\tau_n \in T_n$  for every  $n$ . Whenever such a family  $\tau$  is given as an oracle, we denote by  $A^\tau$  a circuit or a Turing-machine  $A$  with oracle access to  $\tau$ . In addition, when we consider the probability of an event over the choice of  $\tau$ , we mean that for every integer  $n$ , a collection of trapdoor permutation  $\tau_n$  is chosen uniformly at random from  $T_n$  and independently of all other collections.

**Definition 2.3.** A family of trapdoor permutations  $\tau = \{\tau_n = (G_n, F_n, F_n^{-1})\}_{n=1}^\infty$  is  $s(n)$ -hard if for every probabilistic Turing-machine  $A$  that runs in time  $s(n)$ , and for all sufficiently large  $n$ ,

$$\Pr [A^\tau(1^n, G_n(td), y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y)] \leq \frac{1}{s(n)} ,$$

where the probability is taken uniformly over all the possible choices of  $td \in \{0, 1\}^n$  and  $y \in \{0, 1\}^n$ , and over all the possible outcomes of the internal coin tosses of  $A$ .

Note that Definition 2.3 refers to the difficulty of inverting a random permutation  $F(pk, \cdot)$  on a uniformly distributed image  $y$ , when given only  $pk = G(td)$  and  $y$ . Some applications, however, require enhanced hardness conditions. For example, it may be required (cf. [20, Appendix C]) that it is hard to invert  $F(pk, \cdot)$  on  $y$  even given the random coins used in the generation of  $y$ . Note that our formulation captures such hardness condition as well and therefore the impossibility results proved in this paper hold also for enhanced trapdoor permutations.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.2 Commitment Schemes

A commitment scheme is a two-stage interactive protocol between a sender and a receiver. Informally, after the first stage of the protocol, which is referred to as the *commit stage*, the sender is bound to at most one value, not yet revealed to the receiver. In the second stage, which is referred to as the *reveal stage*, the sender reveals its committed value to the receiver. In this paper, where we are interested in proving an impossibility result for commitment schemes, it will be sufficient for us to deal with bit-commitment schemes, i.e., commitment schemes in which the committed value is only one bit. More formally, a bit-commitment scheme is defined via a triplet of probabilistic polynomial-time Turing-machines  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V})$  such that:

- $\mathcal{S}$  receives as input the security parameter  $1^n$  and a bit  $b$ . Following its interaction, it outputs some information **decom** (the decommitment).
- $\mathcal{R}$  receives as input the security parameter  $1^n$ . Following its interaction, it outputs a state information **com** (the commitment).
- $\mathcal{V}$  (acting as the receiver in the reveal stage<sup>8</sup>) receives as input the security parameter  $1^n$ , a commitment **com** and a decommitment **decom**. It outputs either a bit  $b'$  or  $\perp$ .

Denote by  $(\mathbf{decom}|\mathbf{com}) \leftarrow \langle \mathcal{S}(1^n, b), \mathcal{R}(1^n) \rangle$  the experiment in which  $\mathcal{S}$  and  $\mathcal{R}$  interact (using the given inputs and uniformly chosen random coins), and then  $\mathcal{S}$  outputs **decom** while  $\mathcal{R}$  outputs **com**. It is required that for all  $n$ , every bit  $b$ , and every pair  $(\mathbf{decom}|\mathbf{com})$  that may be output by  $\langle \mathcal{S}(1^n, b), \mathcal{R}(1^n) \rangle$ , it holds that  $\mathcal{V}(\mathbf{com}, \mathbf{decom}) = b$ .<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup>A different enhancement, used by [28], requires the permutations' domain to be polynomially dense in  $\{0, 1\}^n$ . Clearly, our impossibility result holds w.r.t. this enhancement as well.

<sup>8</sup>Note that there is no loss of generality in assuming that the reveal stage is non-interactive. This is since any such interactive stage can be replaced with a non-interactive one as follows: The sender sends its internal state to the receiver, who then simulates the sender in the interactive stage.

<sup>9</sup>Although we assume perfect completeness, it is not essential for our results.

The security of a commitment scheme can be defined in two complementary ways, protecting against either an all-powerful sender or an all-powerful receiver. In this paper, we deal with commitment schemes of the latter type, which are referred to as *statistically-hiding* commitment schemes. In order to define the security properties of such schemes, we first introduce the following notation. Given a commitment scheme  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V})$  and a deterministic Turing-machine  $\mathcal{R}^*$ , we denote by  $\text{view}_{\langle \mathcal{S}(b), \mathcal{R}^* \rangle}(n)$  the distribution on the view of  $\mathcal{R}^*$  when interacting with  $\mathcal{S}(1^n, b)$ . This view consists of the sequence of messages it receives from  $\mathcal{S}$ , and the distribution is taken over the random coins of  $\mathcal{S}$ . Note that since no computational restrictions are assumed on  $\mathcal{R}^*$ , without loss of generality  $\mathcal{R}^*$  is deterministic.

**Definition 2.4.** A bit-commitment scheme  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V})$  is  $\rho(n)$ -*hiding* if for every deterministic Turing-machine  $\mathcal{R}^*$  the ensembles  $\{\text{view}_{\langle \mathcal{S}(0), \mathcal{R}^* \rangle}(n)\}$  and  $\{\text{view}_{\langle \mathcal{S}(1), \mathcal{R}^* \rangle}(n)\}$  have statistical difference at most  $\rho(n)$  for all sufficiently large  $n$ . Such a scheme is *statistically-hiding* if it is  $\rho(n)$ -hiding for some negligible function  $\rho(n)$ .

**Definition 2.5.** A bit-commitment scheme  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V})$  is  $\mu(n)$ -*binding* if for every probabilistic polynomial-time Turing-machine  $\mathcal{S}^*$  it holds that

$$\Pr \left[ ((\text{decom}, \text{decom}') | \text{com}) \leftarrow \langle \mathcal{S}^*(1^n), \mathcal{R}(1^n) \rangle : \begin{array}{l} \mathcal{V}(\text{com}, \text{decom}) = 0 \\ \mathcal{V}(\text{com}, \text{decom}') = 1 \end{array} \right] < \mu(n)$$

for all sufficiently large  $n$ , where the probability is taken over the random coins of both  $\mathcal{S}^*$  and  $\mathcal{R}$ . Such a scheme is *computationally-binding* if it is  $\mu(n)$ -binding for some negligible function  $\mu(n)$ , and is *weakly-binding* if it is  $(1 - 1/p(n))$ -binding for some polynomial  $p(n)$ .

## 2.3 Black-Box Reductions

A reduction of a primitive  $P$  to a primitive  $Q$  is a construction of  $P$  out of  $Q$ . Such a construction consists of showing that if there exists an implementation  $C$  of  $Q$ , then there exists an implementation  $M_C$  of  $P$ . This is equivalent to showing that for every adversary that breaks  $M_C$ , there exists an adversary that breaks  $C$ . Such a reduction is *semi-black-box* if it ignores the internal structure of  $Q$ 's implementation, and it is *fully-black-box* if the proof of correctness is black-box as well, i.e., the adversary for breaking  $Q$  ignores the internal structure of both  $Q$ 's implementation and of the (alleged) adversary breaking  $P$ . Semi-black-box reductions are less restricted and thus more powerful than fully-black-box reductions. A taxonomy of black-box reductions was provided by Reingold, Trevisan and Vadhan [53], and the reader is referred to their paper for a more complete and formal view of these notions.

We now formally define the class of constructions considered in this paper. Our main result is concerned with the particular setting of fully-black-box constructions of weakly-binding statistically-hiding commitment schemes from trapdoor permutations. We focus here on a specific definition for these particular primitives and we refer the reader to [53] for a more general definition.

**Definition 2.6.** A fully-black-box construction of a weakly-binding statistically-hiding commitment scheme from an  $s(n)$ -hard family of trapdoor permutations is a quadruple of probabilistic oracle Turing-machines  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V}, A)$  for which the following hold:

1. **Correctness:** For every family  $\tau$  of trapdoor permutations,  $(\mathcal{S}^\tau, \mathcal{R}^\tau, \mathcal{V}^\tau)$  is a statistically-hiding commitment scheme.
2. **Black-box proof of binding:** For every family  $\tau = \{\tau_n = (G_n, F_n, F_n^{-1})\}_{n=1}^\infty$  of trapdoor permutations and for every probabilistic polynomial-time Turing-machine  $\mathcal{S}^*$ , if  $\mathcal{S}^*$  with oracle

access to  $\tau$  breaks the weak binding of  $(\mathcal{S}^\tau, \mathcal{R}^\tau, \mathcal{V}^\tau)$ , then

$$\Pr \left[ A^{\tau, \mathcal{S}^*}(1^n, G_n(td), y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \right] > \frac{1}{s(n)} ,$$

for infinitely many values of  $n$ , where  $A$  runs in time  $s(n)$ , and the probability is taken uniformly over all the possible choices of  $td \in \{0, 1\}^n$  and  $y \in \{0, 1\}^n$ , and over all the possible outcomes of the internal coin tosses of  $A$ .

We remark that the above correctness requirement is very strict and is not essential for our results. In fact, as will become clear later on (in Section 4), for every  $\tau$  such that the protocol  $(\mathcal{S}^\tau, \mathcal{R}^\tau, \mathcal{V}^\tau)$  is a statistically-hiding commitment scheme, we construct a malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  which breaks the binding property of the scheme. Therefore, we could have dealt with a weaker correctness requirement as well, but stating such a weaker requirement in a meaningful way turns out to be quite subtle.

In addition, it would be useful for us to consider the following property of fully-black-box constructions: Consider a malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  that breaks the binding of the commitment scheme and consider the machine  $A$  that wishes to break the security of the trapdoor permutation. Then,  $A$  receives a security parameter  $1^n$  and invokes  $\mathcal{S}^*$  in a black-box manner. Definition 2.6, however, does not restrict the range of security parameters that  $A$  is allowed to invoke  $\mathcal{S}^*$  on. For example,  $A$  may invoke  $\mathcal{S}^*$  on security parameter  $1^{n^2}$ , or even on security parameter  $1^{\Theta(s(n))}$ , where  $s(n)$  is the running time of  $A$ . The following definition will enable us to capture this property of the construction, and again, we present a specific definition for our setting.

**Definition 2.7.** A fully-black-box construction  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V}, A)$  is  $\ell(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding, if for every malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$ , the machine  $A$  on security parameter  $1^n$  invokes  $\mathcal{S}^*$  on security parameters which are at most  $1^{\ell(n)}$ .

### 3 The Oracle

In this section we describe the oracle that will imply our lower bound results. Our oracle  $\mathcal{O}$  is of the form  $(\tau, \text{Sam}^\tau)$ , where  $\tau$  is a family of trapdoor permutations (i.e.,  $\tau = \{\tau_n\}_{n=1}^\infty$ , where  $\tau_n \in T_n$  for every  $n$ ), and  $\text{Sam}^\tau$  is an oracle that, very informally, receives as input a description of a circuit  $C$  (which may contain  $\tau$ -gates) and a string  $z$ , and outputs a uniformly distributed preimage of  $z$  under the mapping defined by  $C$ . As discussed in the introduction, we will impose several essential restrictions on the querying of  $\text{Sam}$  that will prevent it from assisting in inverting  $\tau$ .

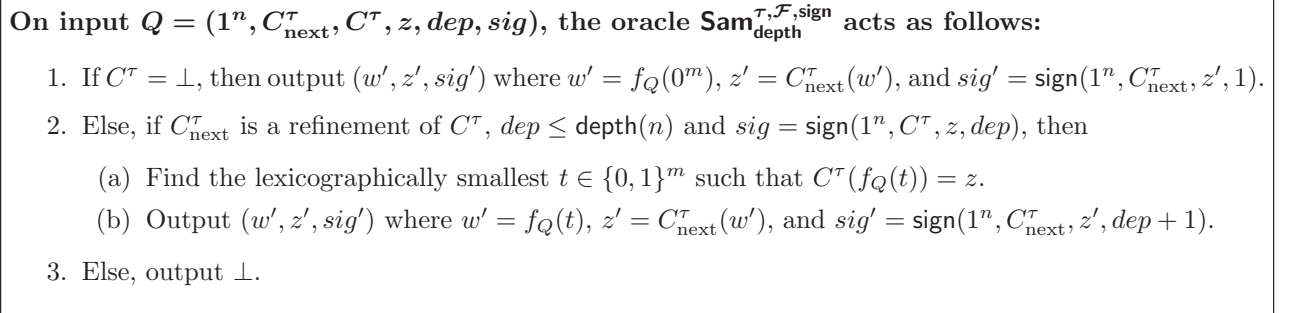
**Description of Sam.** The oracle  $\text{Sam}$  receives as input a query  $Q = (C_{\text{next}}^\tau, C^\tau, z)$ , and outputs a pair  $(w', z')$  where  $w'$  is a uniformly distributed preimage of  $z$  under the mapping defined by the circuit  $C^\tau$ , and  $z' = C_{\text{next}}^\tau(w')$ . We impose the following restrictions:

1.  $z$  was the result of a previous query with  $C^\tau$  as the next-query circuit (note that this imposes a forest-like structure on the queries).
2. The circuit  $C_{\text{next}}^\tau$  is a *refinement* of the circuit  $C^\tau$ , where by a refinement we mean that  $C_{\text{next}}^\tau(w) = (C^\tau(w), \tilde{C}^\tau(w))$  for some circuit  $\tilde{C}^\tau$  and for every  $w$ . In particular, this implies that  $C^\tau$  and  $C_{\text{next}}^\tau$  have the same input length. Given a query  $Q$ , we denote this input length by  $m(Q)$ , and when the query  $Q$  is clear from the context we will write only  $m$ .

3. Each query contains a security parameter  $1^n$ , and **Sam** answers queries only up to depth  $\text{depth}(n)$ , for some “depth restriction” function  $\text{depth} : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$  which is part of the description of **Sam**. The security parameter is set such that a query with security parameter  $1^n$  is allowed to contain circuits with queries to permutations on up to  $n$  bits. Note that although different queries may have different security parameters, we ask that in the same “query-tree”, all queries will have the same security parameter (hence the depth of the tree is already determined by the root query).

In order to impose these restrictions, we equip **Sam** with a family  $\text{sign} = \{\text{sign}_k\}_{k=1}^\infty$  of (random) functions  $\text{sign}_k : \{0, 1\}^k \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{2k}$  that will be used as “signatures” for identifying legal queries as follows: in addition to outputting  $(w', z')$ , **Sam** will also output the value  $\text{sign}(1^n, C_{\text{next}}^\tau, z', \text{dep} + 1)$ , where  $\text{dep}$  is the depth of the query,  $1^n$  is the security parameter of the query, and by applying the “function”  $\text{sign}$  we actually mean that we apply the function  $\text{sign}_k$  for the correct input length. Each query of the form  $Q = (1^n, C_{\text{next}}^\tau, C^\tau, z, \text{dep}, \text{sig})$  is answered by **Sam** if and only if  $C_{\text{next}}^\tau$  is a refinement of  $C^\tau$ ,  $\text{dep} \leq \text{depth}(n)$  and  $\text{sig} = \text{sign}(1^n, C^\tau, z, \text{dep})$ .

Finally, we provide **Sam** with a family of (random) permutations  $\mathcal{F} = \{f_Q\}$ , where for every possible query  $Q$  a permutation  $f_Q$  is chosen uniformly at random from  $\Pi_{m(Q)}$ . Given a query  $Q = (1^n, C_{\text{next}}^\tau, C^\tau, z, \text{dep}, \text{sig})$ , the oracle **Sam** uses the permutation  $f_Q \in \mathcal{F}$  in order to sample  $w'$  as follows: it outputs  $w' = f_Q(t)$  for the lexicographically smallest  $t \in \{0, 1\}^m$  such that  $C^\tau(f_Q(t)) = z$ . Note that whenever the permutation  $f_Q$  is chosen from  $\Pi_m$  uniformly at random, and independently of all other permutations in  $\mathcal{F}$ , then  $w'$  is indeed a uniformly distributed preimage of  $z$ . In this paper, whenever we consider the probability of an event over the choice of the family  $\mathcal{F}$ , we mean that for each query  $Q$  a permutation  $f_Q$  is chosen uniformly at random from  $\Pi_{m(Q)}$  and independently of all other permutations. A complete and formal description of the oracle is provided in Figure 1.



**Figure 1:** The oracle **Sam**.

As mentioned above, the restrictions impose a forest-like structure on any sequence of queries: each query of the form  $Q = (1^n, C_{\text{next}}^\tau, \perp, \perp, \perp, \perp)$  serves as a root of a tree. For any other “legal” query  $Q = (1^n, C_{\text{next}}^\tau, C^\tau, z, \text{dep}, \text{sig})$ , there exists a previous query  $Q'$  which resulted in output  $z$  and contained  $C^\tau$  as its next-query circuit. The query  $Q'$  is identified as the parent of  $Q$  in the query forest and is denoted  $Q' = p(Q)$ . If there is more than one such  $Q'$ , then we choose the first  $Q'$  according to some fixed ordering of the queries. When dealing with Turing-machines, we can identify the queries according to their chronological order.<sup>10</sup>

**Notation 3.1.** We say that a circuit  $A$  queries the oracle  $\text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}$  up to depth  $d$ , if for every **Sam**-query  $Q = (1^n, C_{\text{next}}^\pi, C^\pi, z, \text{dep}, \text{sig})$  that  $A$  makes, it holds that  $\text{dep} \leq d$ .

<sup>10</sup>However, when dealing with circuits we will have to identify the queries according to a some topological order which is consistent with their forest structure. As Lemma 3.2 below indicates, such an ordering implies that for every two queries  $Q_i$  and  $Q_j$  (with a sufficiently large security parameter) such that  $Q_i = p(Q_j)$ , it holds that  $i < j$ .

**Simplifying the notation.** In the remainder of this paper we often ignore both the depth restriction function `depth` and the security parameters, but we still keep in mind that the oracle `Sam` is defined with a restriction on its query depth.

**Imposing legal queries.** Recall that we equip the oracle `Sam` with a family `sign` of functions  $\text{sign}_k : \{0, 1\}^k \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{2k}$  that we claimed can be used for identifying legal queries. As indicated by Figure 1, we say that a circuit  $A$  produces an illegal  $k$ -bit `Sam`-query if it queries `Sam` with some  $Q = (1^n, C_{\text{next}}^\tau, C^\tau, z, \text{dep}, \text{sig})$  for which  $C^\tau \neq \perp$  and  $\text{sig} = \text{sign}_k(1^n, C^\tau, z, \text{dep})$ , but the value  $\text{sig}$  was not given to  $A$  as an answer to a previous `Sam`-query.<sup>11</sup> Since access to the family `sign` is only through `Sam`, in order to produce an illegal query, one must guess the value of  $\text{sign}_k(v)$  for some  $v \in \{0, 1\}^k$  before `Sam` queried  $\text{sign}_k$  on  $v$ . Lemma 3.2 below justifies our assumption that no “illegal” `Sam`-queries are made. We denote by  $\text{sign}_{-k}$  the family `sign` where the  $k$ -th function  $\text{sign}_k$  is left undefined (and in this case we will consider the process of choosing the function  $\text{sign}_k$  uniformly at random), and prove the following lemma:

**Lemma 3.2.** *For every  $k, \tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{depth}, \text{sign}_{-k}$  and circuit  $A$  of size  $s$ , the probability over the random choice of the function  $\text{sign}_k : \{0, 1\}^k \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{2k}$  that the circuit  $A$  with oracle access to  $\mathcal{O} = (\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}})$  produces an illegal  $k$ -bit `Sam`-query is at most  $s/2^k$ .*

**Proof.** Fix  $k, \tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{depth}, \text{sign}_{-k}$  and a circuit  $A$  of size  $s$ . Denote by  $\Gamma$  the set of all functions  $\text{sign}_k$  for which  $A$  with oracle access to  $\mathcal{O} = (\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}})$  produces an illegal `Sam`-query. Then, there exists a set  $\Gamma' \subset \Gamma$  of size at least  $|\Gamma|/s$  and an integer  $1 \leq i \leq s$ , such that for all functions  $\text{sign}_k \in \Gamma'$  we have that the  $i$ -th `Sam`-query that  $A$  makes is illegal, while all the previous  $i - 1$  queries are legal. We claim that every function  $\text{sign}_k \in \Gamma'$  can be described using  $k \cdot (2^{k+1} - 1)$  bits, given  $i, \tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{depth}, \text{sign}_{-k}$  and  $A$ . More specifically, given a function  $\text{sign}_k \in \Gamma'$ , denote by  $v \in \{0, 1\}^k$  the value on which  $A$  guesses the correct value of  $\text{sign}_k(v)$  for producing the illegal query. We can describe the function  $\text{sign}_k$  by specifying its value on the set  $\{0, 1\}^k \setminus \{v\}$  and by specifying  $v$ . This results in  $2k \cdot (2^k - 1) + k = k \cdot (2^{k+1} - 1)$  bits. Indeed, the value  $\text{sign}_k(v)$  can be reconstructed by following the computation of  $A^{\mathcal{O}}$ , answering `Sam`’s `sign`-queries in the first  $i - 1$  queries of  $A$ , and the  $i$ -th query will contain the value  $\text{sign}_k(v)$ . Since we are guaranteed that the first  $i - 1$  queries are legal, `Sam` does not query  $\text{sign}_k$  on  $v$  and the simulation is successful. Therefore, the value  $\text{sign}_k(v)$  can be reconstructed.

This implies that the cardinality of the set  $\Gamma'$  is at most  $2^{k \cdot (2^{k+1} - 1)}$ , and therefore the cardinality of  $\Gamma$  is at most  $s \cdot 2^{k \cdot (2^{k+1} - 1)}$ . This means that the fraction of functions  $\text{sign}_k : \{0, 1\}^k \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{2k}$  for which  $A$  produces an illegal query is at most

$$\frac{s \cdot 2^{k \cdot (2^{k+1} - 1)}}{2^{2k \cdot 2^k}} = \frac{s}{2^k}.$$

■

## 4 Breaking Statistical Commitment Schemes With `Sam`

In this section we show that a random instance of the oracle `Sam` can be used to break the binding of any statistically-hiding commitment scheme. More specifically, for every statistically-hiding commitment scheme  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V})$  with oracle access to a family of trapdoor permutations, we construct a

<sup>11</sup>Note that we denoted by  $k$  not the actual bit-length of the query  $Q$ , but only the bit-length of the part of  $Q$  on which `sign` is applied. That is,  $k$  is the bit-length of the string  $(1^n, C^\tau, z, \text{dep})$ , and in particular  $k \geq n$ .



malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  which has oracle access to  $\text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}$ , and breaks the binding of  $(\mathcal{S}^\tau, \mathcal{R}^\tau, \mathcal{V}^\tau)$  with high probability over the choices of  $\tau$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$  and  $\text{sign}$ . The key point is that if the commitment scheme has  $d(n)$  communication rounds, then  $\mathcal{S}^*$  needs to query  $\text{Sam}$  only up to depth  $d(n) + 1$ . Formally, the following theorem is proved.

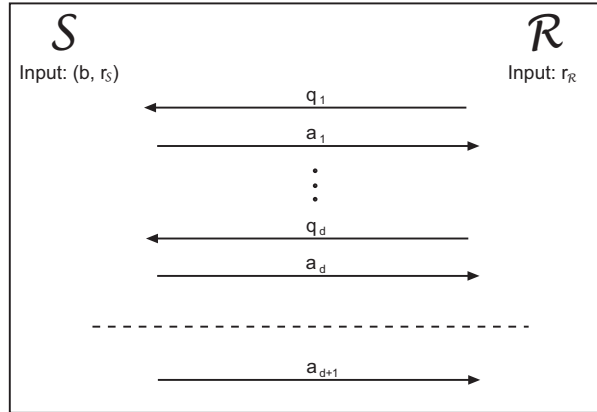
**Theorem 4.1.** *For every  $d(n)$ -round statistically-hiding bit-commitment scheme  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V})$  with oracle access to a family of trapdoor permutations, there exist a polynomial-time malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  and a negligible function  $\nu(n)$ , such that*

$$\Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ \begin{array}{l} ((\text{decom}, \text{decom}') | \text{com}) \leftarrow \left\langle \mathcal{S}^* \text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}(1^n), \mathcal{R}^\tau(1^n, r_{\mathcal{R}}) \right\rangle : \\ \mathcal{V}^\tau(\text{com}, \text{decom}) = 0, \mathcal{V}^\tau(\text{com}, \text{decom}') = 1 \end{array} \right] > 1 - \nu(n) ,$$

for all sufficiently large  $n$ .

Note that in the above theorem, the depth restriction function  $\text{depth}(n)$  of the oracle  $\text{Sam}$  is set to be the function  $d(n) + 1$ , where  $d(n)$  is the number of communication rounds in the commitment scheme  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V})$  with security parameter  $1^n$ . This way,  $\text{Sam}$  will answer queries up to depth  $d(n) + 1$ . In what follows, we define the notation used in this section. Then, we describe the malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  and turn to prove Theorem 4.1.

**Notations.** Let  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V})$  be a statistically-hiding bit-commitment scheme with oracle access to a collection of trapdoor permutations. We denote by  $b \in \{0, 1\}$  and  $r_{\mathcal{S}}, r_{\mathcal{R}} \in \{0, 1\}^*$  the input bit of the sender and the random coins of the sender and the receiver, respectively. We denote by  $d(n)$  the number of communication rounds in the scheme with security parameter  $1^n$  (note that we do not restrict the scheme to access only trapdoor permutations over  $n$ -bits), and without loss of generality we assume that the receiver makes the first move. Each communication round consists of a message sent from the receiver to the sender followed by a message sent from the sender to the receiver. We denote by  $q_i$  and  $a_i$  the messages sent by the receiver and the sender in the  $i$ -th round, respectively, and denote by  $a_{d+1}$  the message sent by the sender in the reveal stage. Finally, we let  $\bar{a}_i = (a_1, \dots, a_i)$  and  $\bar{q}_i = (q_1, \dots, q_i)$ . A  $d$ -round bit-commitment scheme is described in Figure 2.



**Figure 2:** A  $d$ -round bit-commitment scheme.

Although the sender is a probabilistic polynomial-time Turing-machine, in order to interact with the oracle  $\text{Sam}$  we need to identify the sender with a sequence of circuits  $S_1, \dots, S_{d+1}$  as follows. In the first round,  $\mathcal{S}$  sends  $a_1$  by computing  $a_1 = S_1(b, r_{\mathcal{S}}, q_1)$ . Similarly, in the following rounds,  $\mathcal{S}$  sends  $a_i$  by computing  $a_i = S_i(b, r_{\mathcal{S}}, \bar{q}_i)$ . We assume that each message  $a_i$  contains all of the sender's

previous messages  $a_1, \dots, a_{i-1}$  as well (i.e., in the  $i$ -th round the  $\mathcal{S}$  sends actually  $\bar{a}_i$ ), and therefore each circuit  $S_i$  is a *refinement* of  $S_{i-1}$ , as discussed in Section 3). We note that the descriptions of the circuits  $S_1, \dots, S_{d+1}$  can be computed in polynomial-time given a description of  $\mathcal{S}$ .

Finally, in order to simplify the notation regarding the input and output of the oracle **Sam**, in this section we ignore parts of the input and output of **Sam**: we ignore the security parameter and signature function **sign**, and note that Theorem 4.1 actually holds for every fixing of **sign** (since the malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  asks only legal queries). In addition, we consider queries of the form  $Q = (C_{\text{next}}^\tau, C^\tau, z)$ , and answers that consist only of  $w'$ , i.e., an answer consists only of a uniformly distributed preimage of  $z$  under the mapping defined by  $C^\tau$ .

**Description of  $\mathcal{S}^*$ .** On input  $1^n$ , the malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  with oracle access to  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  interacts with the honest receiver  $\mathcal{R}$  as follows.

1. In the first round,  $\mathcal{S}^*$  receives  $\mathcal{R}$ 's message  $q_1$ , and computes the description of the circuit  $C_1 = S_1(\cdot, \cdot, q_1)$  obtained from the circuit  $S_1$  by fixing  $q_1$  as its third input. Then,  $\mathcal{S}^*$  queries  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  with  $(C_1, \perp, \perp)$ , receives  $w_1 = (b_1, r_1)$ , and sends  $a_1 = S_1(b_1, r_1, q_1)$  to  $\mathcal{R}$ .
2. For every  $2 \leq i \leq d(n)$ , in the  $i$ -th round  $\mathcal{S}^*$  receives  $\mathcal{R}$ 's message  $q_i$ , and computes the description of the circuit  $C_i = S_i(\cdot, \cdot, \bar{q}_i)$  obtained from  $S_i$  by fixing the vector  $\bar{q}_i$  as its third input.  $\mathcal{S}^*$  queries  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  with  $(C_i, C_{i-1}, \bar{a}_{i-1})$ , and receives  $w_i = (b_i, r_i)$ . Then,  $\mathcal{S}^*$  sends  $a_i = S_i(b_i, r_i, \bar{q}_i)$  to  $\mathcal{R}$ .
3. In the reveal stage,  $\mathcal{S}^*$  queries  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  with  $(\perp, C_d, \bar{a}_d)$  for  $n$  times, and receives  $n$  pairs  $\left\{ \left( b_{d+1}^{(j)}, r_{d+1}^{(j)} \right) \right\}_{j=1}^n$ . If there exist  $j_0, j_1 \in [n]$  such that  $b_{d+1}^{(j_0)} = 0$  and  $b_{d+1}^{(j_1)} = 1$ , then  $\mathcal{S}^*$  outputs  $\text{decom} = S_{d+1} \left( b_{d+1}^{(j_0)}, r_{d+1}^{(j_0)}, \bar{q}_d \right)$  and  $\text{decom}' = S_{d+1} \left( b_{d+1}^{(j_1)}, r_{d+1}^{(j_1)}, \bar{q}_d \right)$ .

A minor technical detail in step 3 is that the first parameter in each of the  $n$  queries made in the reveal stage should be a distinct circuit instead of  $\perp$ . This guarantees that the answers returned by **Sam** in the reveal stage are independent (otherwise, **Sam** will return the exact same answer  $n$  times). Any fixed sequence of  $n$  distinct circuits may be used. In addition, notice that  $\mathcal{S}^*$  queries **Sam** up to depth  $d(n) + 1$ , as allowed by the depth restriction function  $d(n) + 1$ .

The two main ideas underlying the proof are the following:

1. The distribution of the protocol's transcript when executed with  $\mathcal{S}^*$  and an honest receiver is identical to the distribution of the protocol's transcript when both parties are honest.
2. The assumption that the commitment scheme is statistically-hiding implies that a random transcript can be revealed both as a commitment to  $b = 0$  and as a commitment to  $b = 1$ , with almost equal probabilities.

More specifically, we define two distributions:

- $\mathcal{D}_n^* = \text{view}_{\langle \mathcal{S}^*, \mathcal{R} \rangle}(n)$  is the distribution of the view of  $\mathcal{R}$  in the commit stage when interacting with the malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$ . This view consists of  $\mathcal{R}$ 's random coins and of the sequence of messages it receives from  $\mathcal{S}^*$ . The distribution is taken over  $\mathcal{R}$ 's random coins and over the uniform choice of  $\tau$  and  $\mathcal{F}$ .
- $\mathcal{D}_n = \text{view}_{\langle \mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R} \rangle}(n)$  is the distribution of the view of  $\mathcal{R}$  in the commit stage when interacting with the honest sender  $\mathcal{S}(1^n, b, r_{\mathcal{S}})$ . This view consists of  $\mathcal{R}$ 's random coins and of the sequence of messages it receives from  $\mathcal{S}$ . The distribution is taken over the random coins of  $\mathcal{R}$  and  $\mathcal{S}$ , and over the uniform choice of  $b \in \{0, 1\}$  and  $\tau$ .

**Lemma 4.2.** *The distributions  $\mathcal{D}_n$  and  $\mathcal{D}_n^*$  are identical.*

**Proof.** We show that the distributions  $\mathcal{D}_n$  and  $\mathcal{D}_n^*$  assign equal probabilities to every triplet  $(r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_d, \bar{a}_d)$ . More specifically, we prove by induction on  $1 \leq i \leq d$  that  $\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n}[r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_d, \bar{a}_d] = \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^*}[r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_d, \bar{a}_d]$ .

For  $i = 1$ , clearly we have that  $\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n}[r_{\mathcal{R}}, q_1] = \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^*}[r_{\mathcal{R}}, q_1]$  since  $r_{\mathcal{R}}$  is distributed exactly the same in the two cases, and  $q_1$  is a deterministic function of  $r_{\mathcal{R}}$ . Therefore we only have to show that  $\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n}[a_1|r_{\mathcal{R}}, q_1] = \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^*}[a_1|r_{\mathcal{R}}, q_1]$ . In the first round, the malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  queries  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  with  $Q = (C_1, \perp, \perp)$ , and receives  $w_1 = (b_1, r_1)$ . Note that by the description of  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  and of  $\mathcal{F}$ , there is a random permutation  $f_Q$  which corresponds to  $Q$ , and  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  outputs  $(b_1, r_1) = f_Q(0^m)$ , which is a uniformly distributed value. That is,  $\mathcal{S}^*$  sends  $a_1 = S_1(b_1, r_1, q_1)$  for a uniformly distributed pair  $(b_1, r_1)$  exactly as the honest sender  $\mathcal{S}$  should do.

Assume now that the claim holds for some  $i$ , i.e.,  $\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n}[r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_i, \bar{a}_i] = \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^*}[r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_i, \bar{a}_i]$ . Again, we have that  $\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n}[q_{i+1}|r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_i, \bar{a}_i] = \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^*}[q_{i+1}|r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_i, \bar{a}_i]$ , since in both cases  $q_{i+1}$  is a deterministic function of  $r_{\mathcal{R}}$ ,  $\bar{q}_i$  and  $\bar{a}_i$ . It remains to show that  $\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n}[a_{i+1}|r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_{i+1}, \bar{a}_i] = \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^*}[a_{i+1}|r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_{i+1}, \bar{a}_i]$ . In round  $i + 1$ ,  $\mathcal{S}^*$  queries  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  with  $Q = (C_{i+1}, C_i, \bar{a}_i)$ , and receives  $w_{i+1} = (b_{i+1}, r_{i+1})$ . Note that by the description of  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  and of  $\mathcal{F}$ , the permutation  $f_Q$  which corresponds to  $Q$  was chosen uniformly at random from  $\Pi_m$  and independently of all the other permutations in  $\mathcal{F}$ . Therefore,  $(b_{i+1}, r_{i+1})$  is uniformly distributed among all inputs which are consistent with the protocol's transcript until this point, and therefore the distribution of the resulting  $a_{i+1}$  is exactly as if the honest sender  $\mathcal{S}$  had input  $(b_{i+1}, r_{i+1})$  to begin with. Thus,  $\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n}[a_{i+1}|r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_{i+1}, \bar{a}_i] = \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^*}[a_{i+1}|r_{\mathcal{R}}, \bar{q}_{i+1}, \bar{a}_i]$ , which yields the correctness of the lemma.  $\blacksquare$

Lemma 4.2 now enables us to derive the proof of Theorem 4.1.

**Proof of Theorem 4.1.** In the reveal stage, the malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  uses  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}$  in order to sample uniformly and independently at random  $n$  input pairs  $\left\{ \left( b_{d+1}^{(j)}, r_{d+1}^{(j)} \right) \right\}_{j=1}^n$  from the set of all input pairs which are consistent with the transcript of the commit stage. We prove that with overwhelming probability these inputs enable  $\mathcal{S}^*$  to reveal both to  $b = 0$  and to  $b = 1$ .

Denote by  $\mathcal{D}_n^0 = \text{view}_{(\mathcal{S}(0), \mathcal{R})}(n)$  the distribution of the honest receiver's view in the commit stage when interacting with the honest sender  $\mathcal{S}(1^n, 0, r_{\mathcal{S}})$ . This view consists of its random coins and of the sequence of messages it receives from  $\mathcal{S}$ , and the distribution is taken over the random coins of  $\mathcal{R}$  and  $\mathcal{S}$  and over the choice of  $\tau$ . Similarly, let  $\mathcal{D}_n^1 = \text{view}_{(\mathcal{S}(1), \mathcal{R})}(n)$ .

We define a set of *good* transcripts. This set consists of all transcripts of the commit stage which enable  $\mathcal{S}^*$  to reveal both to  $b = 0$  and to  $b = 1$  with overwhelming probability. We show that with overwhelming probability the transcript is in this set. Denote by  $\rho(n)$  the hiding parameter of the commitment scheme (see Definition 2.4, and recall that the commitment scheme is statistically-hiding, and therefore  $\rho(n)$  is a negligible function). Formally, we define

$$\text{GOOD} = \left\{ \text{trans} : \left( 1 - \sqrt{\rho(n)} \right) \cdot \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^0}[\text{trans}] < \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^1}[\text{trans}] < \left( 1 + \sqrt{\rho(n)} \right) \cdot \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^0}[\text{trans}] \right\}.$$

Note that for every transcript  $\text{trans}$  of the commit stage and for every  $j \in [n]$ , it holds that

$$\frac{\Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ b_{d+1}^{(j)} = 0 \mid \text{trans} \right]}{\Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ b_{d+1}^{(j)} = 1 \mid \text{trans} \right]} = \frac{\Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ b_{d+1}^{(j)} = 0 \wedge \text{trans} \right]}{\Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ b_{d+1}^{(j)} = 1 \wedge \text{trans} \right]} = \frac{\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^0}[\text{trans}]}{\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^1}[\text{trans}]},$$

where the second equality follows from Lemma 4.2. The definition of the set **GOOD** implies that if  $\text{trans} \in \text{GOOD}$ , then for all sufficiently large  $n$  it holds that

$$\min \left\{ \Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ b_{d+1}^{(j)} = 0 \mid \text{trans} \right], \Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ b_{d+1}^{(j)} = 1 \mid \text{trans} \right] \right\} > 1/3 .$$

Therefore,

$$\Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} [\mathcal{S}^* \text{ fails} \mid \text{trans} \in \text{GOOD}] < 2 \cdot \left( \frac{2}{3} \right)^n ,$$

since a failure occurs only in the case that all  $n$  input pairs sampled in the reveal stage have  $b_{d+1}^{(j)} = 0$ , or that they all have  $b_{d+1}^{(j)} = 1$ . It remains to show that the transcript is in **GOOD** with overwhelming probability. Lemma 4.2 and the fact that the statistical distance between the distributions  $\mathcal{D}_n^0$  and  $\mathcal{D}_n^1$  is at most  $\rho(n)$  imply that

$$\begin{aligned} \Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} [\text{trans} \in \text{GOOD}] &= \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n} [\text{trans} \in \text{GOOD}] \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \cdot (\Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^0} [\text{trans} \in \text{GOOD}] + \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^1} [\text{trans} \in \text{GOOD}]) \\ &\geq \frac{1}{2} \cdot (2 \cdot \Pr_{\mathcal{D}_n^0} [\text{trans} \in \text{GOOD}] - \rho(n)) \\ &> 1 - 2\sqrt{\rho(n)} - \frac{\rho(n)}{2} , \end{aligned}$$

where the last inequality follows from Fact 2.1. We conclude the proof by

$$\begin{aligned} \Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} [\mathcal{S}^* \text{ fails}] &\leq \Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} [\text{trans} \notin \text{GOOD}] + \Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} [\mathcal{S}^* \text{ fails} \mid \text{trans} \in \text{GOOD}] \\ &\leq 2\sqrt{\rho(n)} + \frac{\rho(n)}{2} + 2 \cdot \left( \frac{2}{3} \right)^n . \end{aligned}$$

Therefore,

$$\Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ \begin{array}{c} ((\text{decom}, \text{decom}') | \text{com}) \leftarrow \left\langle \mathcal{S}^* \text{ Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}}(1^n), \mathcal{R}^{\tau}(1^n, r_{\mathcal{R}}) \right\rangle : \\ \mathcal{V}^{\tau}(\text{com}, \text{decom}) = 0, \mathcal{V}^{\tau}(\text{com}, \text{decom}') = 1 \end{array} \right] > 1 - \nu(n) ,$$

for all sufficiently large  $n$ , where  $\nu(n) = 2\sqrt{\rho(n)} + \frac{\rho(n)}{2} + 2 \cdot \left( \frac{2}{3} \right)^n$ . ■

## 5 Random Permutations are Hard to Invert Even With Sam

We now prove our main technical result regarding the oracle **Sam**. For simplicity, we first consider the task of inverting a family of permutations, and then extend the result to the task of inverting a family of trapdoor permutations. We consider the oracle **Sam** exactly as defined in Section 3 with the only difference that the trapdoor permutation family  $\tau$  is replaced with a permutation family  $\pi$ .

Our goal is to upper bound the success probability of circuits having oracle access to **Sam** in the task of inverting a uniformly chosen permutation  $\pi_n \in \Pi_n$  on a uniformly chosen image  $y \in \{0, 1\}^n$  (i.e., the task of retrieving the value  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  given  $y$  and oracle access to both  $\pi$  and **Sam**). Our contribution is in relating this success probability to the maximal depth of the **Sam**-queries made by the circuit, and to the size of the circuit. The following theorem is proved.

**Theorem 5.1.** *For every circuit  $A$  of size  $s(n)$  that queries  $\text{Sam}$  up to depth  $d(n)$  such that  $s(n)^{3d(n)+2} < 2^{n/8}$ , for every depth restriction function  $\text{depth}$  and for all sufficiently large  $n$ , it holds that*

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \right] \leq \frac{1}{s(n)} .$$

Before turning to prove Theorem 5.1, we first provide a brief overview of the structure of the proof. Consider a circuit  $A$  which is given an input  $y \in \{0,1\}^n$ , and its goal is to retrieve the value  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  while having oracle access to both  $\pi = \{\pi_i\}_{i=1}^\infty$  and  $\text{Sam}$ . The idea underlying our proof is to distinguish between two cases: one in which  $A$  obtains information on the value  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  via one of its  $\text{Sam}$ -queries and the other in which none of  $A$ 's  $\text{Sam}$ -queries provides sufficient information for retrieving  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ . More specifically, we define:

**Definition 5.2.** A  $\text{Sam}$ -query  $(1^\ell, C_{\text{next}}^\pi, C^\pi, z, \text{dep}, \text{sig})$  produces a  $y$ -hit if  $\text{Sam}$  outputs  $(w', z', \text{sig}')$  such that some  $\pi_n$ -gate in the computation of  $C^\pi(w')$  has input  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ .

Given  $\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}, \text{depth}$ , a circuit  $A$  and a challenge image  $y \in \{0,1\}^n$ , we denote by  $\text{SamHIT}_y$  the event in which one of the  $\text{Sam}$ -queries made by  $A$  in the computation of  $A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y)$  produces a  $y$ -hit. From this point on, the proof proceeds in two modular parts. In the first part of the proof, we consider the case that the event  $\text{SamHIT}_y$  does not occur, and prove a “reconstruction lemma” which extends an information-theoretic argument of Gennaro and Trevisan [16]. They showed that if a circuit  $A$  manages to invert a permutation  $\pi_n$  on a relatively large set of images, then this permutation has a short representation given  $A$ . We generalize their argument to deal with circuits having oracle access to  $\text{Sam}$ . In this part we do not restrict at all the depth of the  $\text{Sam}$ -queries and their security parameters, and prove the following lemma.

**Lemma 5.3.** *For every circuit  $A$  of size at most  $2^{n/7}$ , for every depth restriction function  $\text{depth}$  and for all sufficiently large  $n$ , it holds that*

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}_y} \right] \leq 2^{-n/8} .$$

In the second part of the proof, we show that the case where the event  $\text{SamHIT}_y$  does occur can be reduced to the case where the event  $\text{SamHIT}_y$  does not occur. In this proof, both the size of the circuit and the depth of its  $\text{Sam}$ -queries play an instrumental role. Specifically, given a circuit  $A$  that tries to invert a permutation  $\pi$ , we construct a circuit  $M$  that succeeds almost as well as  $A$ , without  $M$ 's  $\text{Sam}$ -queries producing any  $y$ -hits. By analyzing the probabilistic process of the computation  $A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y)$  we prove the following lemma.

**Lemma 5.4.** *For every circuit  $A$  of size  $s(n)$  that queries  $\text{Sam}$  up to depth  $d(n)$ , and for every depth restriction function  $\text{depth}$ , if*

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \right] \geq \frac{1}{s(n)}$$

*for infinitely many values of  $n$ , then there exists a circuit  $M$  of size  $O(s(n))$  such that*

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ M^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}_y} \right] \geq \frac{1}{s(n)^{3d(n)+2}}$$

*for infinitely many values of  $n$ .*

In what follows we show that Theorem 5.1 is a straightforward corollary of Lemmata 5.3 and 5.4. In Subsection 5.1 we extend our statement to deal with trapdoor permutations, and this form of the result will be used in the lower bound proof in Section 6. Then, in Subsections 5.2 and 5.3 we prove Lemmata 5.3 and 5.4, respectively.

**Proof of Theorem 5.1.** Assume for a contradiction that there exist a family of circuits  $A = \{A_n\}$ , each of size at most  $s(n)$  that queries **Sam** up to depth  $d(n)$  such that  $s(n)^{3d(n)+2} < 2^{n/8}$ , and a depth restriction function **depth**, for which

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A_n^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}} (y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \right] > \frac{1}{s(n)} ,$$

for infinitely many values of  $n$ . Lemma 5.4 implies that there exists a family  $M = \{M_n\}$  of circuits, such that each  $M_n$  is of size  $O(s(n)) \leq 2^{n/7}$ , and

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ M_n^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}} (y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \right] \geq \frac{1}{s(n)^{3d(n)+2}} > \frac{1}{2^{n/8}} ,$$

for infinitely many values of  $n$ , which is a contradiction to Lemma 5.3.  $\blacksquare$

### 5.1 Extension to Trapdoor Permutations

The basic idea in extending the result for trapdoor permutation is in applying Theorem 5.1 twice. Consider a collection  $\tau_n = (G_n, F_n, F_n^{-1})$  of trapdoor permutations over  $\{0,1\}^n$  and a circuit  $A$  which successfully inverts a permutation  $F_n(pk, \cdot)$ , for some  $pk = G_n(td)$ , on some image  $y$ . If during  $A$ 's computation the procedure  $F_n^{-1}$  is queried with  $td$ , then the circuit  $A$  can be used to invert a random permutation  $\pi_n = G_n$  on  $pk$ . In addition, if the procedure  $F_n^{-1}$  is not queried with  $td$ , then essentially  $F_n^{-1}$  does not help in inverting  $F_n(pk, \cdot)$  on  $y$ , and the circuit  $A$  can be used to invert a random permutation  $\pi_n = F_n(pk, \cdot)$  on  $y$ . Note that an important point in this argument is that  $F_n^{-1}$  may be queried by both  $A$  and **Sam**. We prove the following theorem:

**Theorem 5.5.** *For every circuit  $A$  of size  $s(n)$  that queries **Sam** up to depth  $d(n)$  such that  $s(n)^{3d(n)+2} < 2^{n/8}$ , for every depth restriction function **depth** and for all sufficiently large  $n$ , it holds that*

$$\Pr_{\substack{td \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \tau, \mathcal{F} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \text{sign}}} \left[ A^{\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}} (G_n(td), y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \right] \leq \frac{2}{s(n)} .$$

In order to prove Theorem 5.5 we need a slightly more general form of Theorem 5.1, in which the circuit  $A$  has oracle access to an additional (fixed) oracle **AUX**. Access to this oracle is given also to **Sam**, in order to enable **Sam** to sample from circuits with **AUX**-gates. The following statement is obtained as a straightforward refinement of notations in the proof of Theorem 5.1.

**Theorem 5.6.** *For every circuit  $A$  of size  $s(n)$  that queries **Sam** up to depth  $d(n)$  such that  $s(n)^{3d(n)+2} < 2^{n/8}$ , for every depth restriction function **depth**, for every oracle **AUX** and for all sufficiently large  $n$ , it holds that*

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{AUX}, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \text{AUX}, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}} (y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \right] \leq \frac{1}{s(n)} .$$

**Proof of Theorem 5.5.** Given  $\tau = \{(G_i, F_i, F_i^{-1})\}_{i=1}^\infty, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}, \text{depth}, y \in \{0,1\}^n$  and a circuit  $A$ , denote by  $\text{TDHIT}_{td}$  the event in which  $A^{\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}} (G_n(td), y)$  produces a **Sam**-query  $(1^\ell, C_{\text{next}}^\tau, C^\tau, z, \text{dep}, \text{sig})$  that results in answer  $(w', z', \text{sig}')$  such that one of the  $F_n^{-1}$  gates in the computations of  $C^\tau(w')$  or  $C_{\text{next}}^\tau(w')$  has input  $(td, y')$  for some  $y'$ . Note that without loss of generality, we can assume that  $A$  does not query  $\tau$  directly, as any  $\tau$ -query can be replaced by a single



query to  $\text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}$ . To simplify notation, we denote for the rest of the proof  $pk = G_n(td)$ , i.e.,  $pk$  is the public key corresponding to the trapdoor  $td$ . For every  $n$ , it holds that

$$\begin{aligned} & \Pr_{\substack{td \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \tau, \mathcal{F} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \text{sign}}} \left[ A^{\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(pk, y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \right] \\ & \leq \Pr_{\substack{td \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \tau, \mathcal{F} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \text{sign}}} \left[ A^{\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(pk, y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \wedge \text{TDHIT}_{td} \right] \end{aligned} \quad (5.1)$$

$$+ \Pr_{\substack{td \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \tau, \mathcal{F} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \text{sign}}} \left[ A^{\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(pk, y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \mid \overline{\text{TDHIT}}_{td} \right] . \quad (5.2)$$

We show that the expressions in Equations 5.1 and 5.2 can be bounded by the probability of inverting  $G_n$  or inverting one of the  $F_n(pk, \cdot)$ 's respectively, using  $A$  as a subroutine.

We begin with Equation 5.1. In this case we can construct a circuit  $B$ , such that whenever  $\text{TDHIT}_{td}$  occurs,  $B$  outputs  $td$ . Therefore, if

$$\Pr_{\substack{td \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \tau, \mathcal{F} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \text{sign}}} \left[ A^{\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(pk, y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \wedge \text{TDHIT}_{td} \right] > \epsilon(n) ,$$

then in particular there is a fixing of  $y \in \{0,1\}^n$  and of  $F_n(pk, \cdot) \in \Pi_n$  for every  $pk \in \{0,1\}^n$  for which this holds (i.e., we fix everything except for  $G = \{G_n\}_{n=1}^\infty$ ). Therefore, we have that

$$\Pr_{\substack{G, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ pk \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ B^{G, \text{AUX}, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{G, \text{AUX}, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(pk) = G_n^{-1}(pk) \right] > \epsilon(n) ,$$

where  $\text{AUX} = \{(F_n, F_n^{-1})\}_{n=1}^\infty$ . Thus, Theorem 5.6 yields that  $\epsilon(n) < 1/s(n)$  for all sufficiently large  $n$ . Now we consider Equation 5.2 and assume that

$$\Pr_{\substack{td \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \tau, \mathcal{F} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \text{sign}}} \left[ A^{\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(pk, y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \mid \overline{\text{TDHIT}}_{td} \right] > \epsilon(n) .$$

In this case, for every  $n$  there exist a specific  $pk_n = G_n(td)$  and a fixing of  $G_n$  and  $F_n(pk'_n, \cdot)$  for all  $pk'_n \neq pk_n$  such that

$$\Pr_{\substack{F_{pk}, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{F_{pk}, \text{AUX}, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{F_{pk}, \text{AUX}, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(pk_n, y) = F_n^{-1}(td_n, y) \right] > \epsilon(n) ,$$

where  $F_{pk} = \{F_i(pk_i, \cdot)\}_{i=1}^\infty$ ,  $\text{AUX} = (G, F_{\neq pk_n}, F_{\neq pk_n}^{-1})$ , and  $F_{\neq pk_n}$  and  $F_{\neq pk_n}^{-1}$  denote that these oracles do not answer queries on  $pk_n$  or  $td_n = G_n^{-1}(pk_n)$ , respectively. An important remark here is that if the event  $\text{TDHIT}_{td}$  does not occur, then from the description of the oracle  $\text{Sam}$  we know that  $\text{Sam}$  does not query  $F_n^{-1}$  on  $td_n$ . Therefore it is sufficient to provide  $\text{Sam}$  with access to  $F_{\neq pk_n}^{-1}$ . Thus, Theorem 5.6 yields that  $\epsilon(n) < 1/s(n)$  for all sufficiently large  $n$ . Hence, for all sufficiently large  $n$ ,

$$\Pr_{\substack{td \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \tau, \mathcal{F} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \text{sign}}} \left[ A^{\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(G_n(td), y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \right] \leq \frac{2}{s(n)} .$$

■

## 5.2 The Reconstruction Lemma

The following extends the reconstruction lemma of Gennaro and Trevisan [16]. The idea underlying the claim is the following: if a circuit  $A$  manages to invert a permutation  $\pi$  on some set, then given the circuit  $A$ , the permutation  $\pi$  can be described without specifying its value on a relatively large fraction of this set. We denote by  $\pi_{-n}$  a family of permutations  $\pi = \{\pi_i\}_{i=1}^\infty$  where the permutation  $\pi_n$  is left undefined.

**Claim 5.7.** For every  $\pi$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$ , **sign**, **depth**, circuit  $A$  of size  $s$  and integer  $n$ , if

$$\Pr_{y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}} (y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}_y} \right] \geq \epsilon,$$

then, given  $\pi_{-n}$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$ , **sign**, **depth** and  $A$ , the permutation  $\pi_n$  can be described using  $2 \log \binom{2^n}{a} + \log((2^n - a)!)$  bits, where  $a \geq \epsilon 2^n / (2s^2)$ .

**Proof.** Denote by  $I \subseteq \{0,1\}^n$  the set of points  $y \in \{0,1\}^n$  on which  $A$  successfully inverts  $\pi_n$  with no  $y$ -hits. We claim that there exists a relatively large set  $Y \subseteq I$ , such that the value of  $\pi_n^{-1}$  on the set  $Y$  is determined by  $\pi_{-n}$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$ , **sign**, **depth**,  $A$ , the sets  $Y$  and  $X = \pi_n^{-1}(Y)$ , and the value of  $\pi_n^{-1}$  on the set  $\{0,1\}^n \setminus Y$ .

We define the set  $Y$  via the following sequential process. Initially  $Y$  is empty, and we remove the lexicographically smallest element  $y$  from  $I$  and insert it into  $Y$ . Then, we follow the computation  $A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}} (y)$ , denote by  $(1^{n_1}, C_{\text{next},1}^\pi, C_1^\pi, z_1, \text{dep}_1, \text{sig}_1), \dots, (1^{n_q}, C_{\text{next},q}^\pi, C_q^\pi, z_q, \text{dep}_q, \text{sig}_q)$  the queries made by  $A$  to **Sam**, and by  $(w'_1, z'_1, \text{sig}'_1), \dots, (w'_q, z'_q, \text{sig}'_q)$  their corresponding answers. In addition, denote by  $y_1, \dots, y_t$  the outputs of all the  $\pi_n$ -gates in the computations of  $C_1^\pi(w'_1), \dots, C_q^\pi(w'_q)$  and the outputs of all  $A$ 's direct queries to  $\pi_n$ . We now remove  $y_1, \dots, y_t$  from the set  $I$  (note that these are not necessarily in the set  $I$ ). Then, remove the lexicographically smallest element from the remaining elements of  $I$ , insert it to  $Y$  and continue in the same manner until the set  $I$  is emptied.

Note that at each iteration one element is inserted into the set  $Y$ , and at most  $s^2 + s + 1 \leq 2s^2$  elements are removed from the set  $I$  (the number  $q$  of **Sam**-queries made by  $A$  is at most  $s$ , and in each circuit given by  $A$  as input to **Sam** the number of  $\pi_n$ -gates is again at most  $s$ . In addition,  $A$  may directly query  $\pi_n$  on at most  $s$  inputs). Since the set  $I$  initially contains at least  $\epsilon 2^n$  elements, then when the process terminates we have that  $|Y| \geq \epsilon 2^n / (2s^2)$ .

We now claim that  $\pi_n$  is completely determined given  $\pi_{-n}$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$ , **sign**, **depth**,  $A$ , the descriptions of the sets  $Y$  and  $X = \pi_n^{-1}(Y)$ , and the value of  $\pi_n^{-1}$  on the set  $\{0,1\}^n \setminus Y$ . More specifically, we show that the values of  $\pi_n^{-1}$  on the set  $Y$  can be reconstructed. For each  $y \in Y$  taken in lexicographical increasing order, we reconstruct  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  by simulating  $\pi$  and  $\text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}$  in the computation  $A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}} (y)$ . Note that if the simulation is correct, then  $A$  will output  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ . On input  $Q_i = (1^{n_i}, C_{\text{next},i}^\pi, C_i^\pi, z_i, \text{dep}_i, \text{sig}_i)$  with a corresponding permutation  $f_{Q_i} \in \mathcal{F}$ , the simulator acts as follows.

1. If  $C_i^\pi = \perp$  then output  $(w'_i, z'_i, \text{sig}'_i)$ , where  $w'_i = f_{Q_i}(0^m)$ ,  $z'_i = C_{\text{next},i}^\pi(w'_i)$  and  $\text{sig}'_i = \text{sign}(1^{n_i}, C_{\text{next},i}^\pi, z'_i, 1)$ . The simulation is clearly correct in this case.
2. Else, if  $C_{\text{next},i}^\pi$  is a refinement of  $C_i^\pi$ ,  $\text{dep}_i \leq \text{depth}(n_i)$  and  $\text{sig}_i = \text{sign}(1^{n_i}, C_i^\pi, z_i, \text{dep}_i)$ , then enumerate all  $t \in \{0,1\}^m$  in lexicographically increasing order, and output  $w'_i = f_{Q_i}(t)$  for the minimal  $t$  such that  $C_i^\pi(f_{Q_i}(t))$  can be computed (i.e., all  $\pi_n$ -queries can be answered) and its resulting value is  $z_i$ . In addition, output  $z'_i = C_{\text{next},i}^\pi(w'_i)$  and  $\text{sig}'_i = \text{sign}(1^{n_i}, C_{\text{next},i}^\pi, z'_i, \text{dep}_i + 1)$ . We claim that the simulator indeed outputs  $w'_i = f_{Q_i}(t)$  for the lexicographically smallest  $t$  such that  $C_i^\pi(f(t)) = z_i$ , and therefore the simulation is correct. Denote by  $t_0$  this minimal  $t$ . It is sufficient to show that the simulator can compute  $C_i^\pi(f_{Q_i}(t_0))$ . Clearly, it can compute any  $\pi_i$ -queries for every  $i \neq n$ . In addition, the computation may involve four possible  $\pi_n$ -queries:
  - $\pi_n$ -query on  $x \in \{0,1\}^n \setminus X$ . The value is explicitly given.
  - $\pi_n$ -query on  $x \in X$  for which  $\pi_n(x) <_{\text{lex}} y$ . The required value was already reconstructed.

- $\pi_n$ -query on  $x \in X$  for which  $\pi_n(x) >_{lex} y$ . This is impossible: otherwise, we have that both  $y \in Y$  and  $\pi_n(x) \in Y$ , but  $y$  was inserted to  $Y$  before  $\pi_n(x)$  was inserted to  $Y$ , and therefore  $\pi_n(x)$  should have been removed from  $I$ , and in particular not inserted into  $Y$ .
- $\pi_n$ -query on  $x \in X$  for which  $\pi_n(x) = y$ . Impossible, otherwise the **Sam**-query  $Q_i$  produces a  $y$ -hit.

3. Else, output  $\perp$ .

We also have to show that the simulator can answer all of  $A$ 's direct  $\pi$ -queries. Again, it can clearly answer any direct  $\pi_i$ -queries for every  $i \neq n$ . Whenever  $A$  asks for the value of  $\pi_n$  on some value  $x$ , the simulator acts as follows: if this value is already known, then the simulator outputs  $\pi_n(x)$  to  $A$ . Otherwise, if the value is not known, we claim that it must be that  $x = \pi_n^{-1}(y)$  and in this case the simulator successfully reconstructed the desired value and can halt. Indeed, there are four possible such queries:

- $\pi_n$ -query on  $x \in \{0, 1\}^n \setminus X$ . The value is explicitly given.
- $\pi_n$ -query on  $x \in X$  for which  $\pi_n(x) <_{lex} y$ . The required value was already reconstructed.
- $\pi_n$ -query on  $x \in X$  for which  $\pi_n(x) >_{lex} y$ . This is impossible (as above).
- $\pi_n$ -query on  $x \in X$  for which  $\pi_n(x) = y$ . In this case the query itself gives the desired answer  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ .

Thus, we can successfully reconstruct the values of  $\pi_n^{-1}$  on the set  $Y$ . Finally, note that describing the sets  $Y$  and  $X$ , and the values of  $\pi_n^{-1}$  on the set  $\{0, 1\}^n \setminus Y$  requires  $2 \log \binom{2^n}{|Y|} + \log((2^n - |Y|)!) \leq 2^n$  bits.  $\blacksquare$

Now we are able to prove the following lemma, which is a stronger form of Lemma 5.3.

**Lemma 5.8.** *For every  $\pi_n$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$ , sign, depth, circuit  $A$  of size at most  $2^{n/7}$  and for all sufficiently large  $n$ ,*

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi_n \leftarrow \Pi_n \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \right] \leq 2^{-n/8}.$$

**Proof.** Claim 5.7 implies that for every circuit  $A$  of size  $s \leq 2^{n/7}$  and for every  $\pi_n$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$ , sign and depth, the fraction of permutations  $\pi_n$  for which

$$\Pr_{y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \right] \geq 2^{-n/7}$$

is at most

$$\frac{\binom{N}{a}^2 (N-a)!}{N!} = \frac{\binom{N}{a}}{a!},$$

where  $N = 2^n$ , and  $a \geq 2^{-n/7} \cdot N/(2s^2) \geq N^{4/7}/2$ . Using the inequalities  $a! \geq (a/e)^a$  and  $\binom{N}{a} \leq (Ne/a)^a$ , the above expression is upper bounded by

$$\left( \frac{Ne^2}{a^2} \right)^a \leq \left( \frac{4e^2}{N^{1/7}} \right)^a \leq 2^{-a} \leq 2^{-N^{4/7}/2},$$

for sufficiently large  $N$ . Therefore,

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi_n \leftarrow \Pi_n \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \right] \leq 2^{-N^{4/7}/2} + 2^{-n/7} \leq 2^{-n/8}.$$

$\blacksquare$

### 5.3 Avoiding $y$ -Hits by Sam

Given a circuit  $A$  of size  $s(n)$  that queries **Sam** up to depth  $d(n)$  such that

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \right] \geq \frac{1}{s(n)} ,$$

we would like to construct a circuit  $M$  which inverts a random permutation  $\pi_n \in \Pi_n$  on a random image  $y \in \{0,1\}^n$  almost as well as  $A$  does, without  $M$ 's **Sam**-queries producing any  $y$ -hits. Recall (Definition 5.2), that we say that a **Sam**-query  $Q = (1^\ell, C_{\text{next}}^\pi, C^\pi, z, \text{dep}, \text{sig})$  produces a  $y$ -hit if **Sam** outputs  $(w', z', \text{sig}')$  such that some  $\pi_n$ -gate in the computation of  $C^\pi(w')$  has input  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ . In addition, we denoted by  $\text{SamHIT}_y$  the event in which at least one **Sam**-query produces a  $y$ -hit.

**Description of  $M$ .** On input  $y \in \{0,1\}^n$ ,  $M$  feeds  $A$  with  $y$  as its input, and delivers all of  $A$ 's queries to **Sam** and to  $\pi$  with the following exception: for each **Sam**-query  $(1^\ell, C_{\text{next}}^\pi, C^\pi, z, \text{dep}, \text{sig})$  with answer  $(w', z', \text{sig}')$  from **Sam**,  $M$  computes  $C_{\text{next}}^\pi(w')$ . If some  $\pi_n$ -gate in the computation of  $C_{\text{next}}^\pi(w')$  has input  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ , then  $M$  outputs  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  and halts. Otherwise, it provides  $A$  with the answer  $(w', z', \text{sig}')$  to the query, which enables  $A$  to proceed with its computation. If  $M$  did not halt before the termination of  $A$ 's computation, then it outputs the output of  $A$  and halts.

**Proof of Lemma 5.4.** The circuit  $M$  does not make any additional **Sam**-queries other than those made by  $A$ . Therefore, if  $A$  inverts  $\pi_n$  on  $y$  without producing any  $y$ -hits in its **Sam**-queries, then so does  $M$ . Formally, if

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}_y} \right] \geq \frac{1}{2s(n)} ,$$

then

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ M^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}_y} \right] \geq \frac{1}{2s(n)} .$$

Thus, for the rest of the proof we focus on the more interesting case, in which  $A$  does produce a  $y$ -hit in one of its **Sam**-queries with noticeable probability. That is, we assume that

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \text{SamHIT}_y \right] \geq \frac{1}{2s(n)} . \quad (5.3)$$

Let us assume for now (only for this paragraph) that all the **Sam**-queries made by  $A$  are legal (as discussed in Section 3), and suppose that  $Q_i = (1^{\ell_i}, C_{\text{next},i}^\pi, C_i^\pi, z_i, \text{dep}_i, \text{sig}_i)$  is a query that produces a  $y$ -hit. Recall that the restrictions on **Sam** impose a forest-like structure on the legal queries, and therefore there exists a parent-query  $Q_{p(i)} = (1^{\ell_{p(i)}}, C_{\text{next},p(i)}^\pi, C_{p(i)}^\pi, z_{p(i)}, \text{dep}_{p(i)}, \text{sig}_{p(i)})$  of  $Q_i$ , for which it holds that  $C_{\text{next},p(i)}^\pi = C_i^\pi$ . Our main observation is the following: if  $Q_i$  results in output  $w'_i$  such that one of the  $\pi_n$ -gates in the computation of  $C_i^\pi(w'_i)$  has input  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ , then with high probability the parent query  $Q_{p(i)}$  results in output  $w'_{p(i)}$  such that one of the  $\pi_n$ -gates in the computation of  $C_{\text{next},p(i)}^\pi(w'_{p(i)})$  has input  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ . Therefore, already after query  $Q_{p(i)}$ , the circuit  $M$  will retrieve the value  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  and halt. In particular,  $M$  will not query **Sam** with  $Q_i$ , and therefore no  $y$ -hits will occur.

It may be that some of the **Sam**-queries made by  $A$  are illegal, and then the above observation does not necessarily hold. Indeed, it is not particularly hard to guess a valid signature on a short query. However, when  $A$  tries to invert a permutation  $\pi_n$  over  $n$  bits, we need only consider queries with security parameter at least  $1^n$ : any other query does not contain circuits with  $\pi_n$  gates (and

therefore cannot produce any  $y$ -hits) and also cannot be a parent of queries with  $\pi_n$  gates. Formally, we denote by  $\text{Legal}_n$  the event in which all the **Sam**-queries that  $A$  makes which include security parameter at least  $1^n$  are legal. Lemma 3.2 enables us to claim that if Equation 5.3 holds, then

$$\begin{aligned} & \Pr_{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \text{SamHIT}_y \wedge \text{Legal}_n \right] \\ & \geq \frac{1}{2s(n)} - \sum_{i \geq n} \frac{s(n)}{2^i} \\ & = \frac{1}{2s(n)} - \frac{s(n)}{2^{n-1}} \\ & \geq \frac{1}{4s(n)} , \end{aligned}$$

where the last inequality holds for every  $s(n) \leq 2^{(n-3)/2}$ . Therefore, we can assume for the rest of the proof that all the **Sam**-queries with security parameter at least  $1^n$  are legal. Denote by  $Q_1, \dots, Q_q$  the random variables corresponding to  $A$ 's queries that have security parameter at least  $1^n$ . Then, assuming that all these queries are legal, we have that every query  $Q_i$  is either a root-query (i.e.,  $Q_i$  is of the form  $(1^{\ell_i}, C_{\text{next},i}, \perp, \perp, \perp, \perp)$ ), or there exists a query  $Q_j$  such that  $j = p(i)$  as discussed in Section 3 (i.e.,  $Q_j$  is the parent of  $Q_i$ ).

In order to provide a clear exposition of the proof and its main ideas, we choose to focus here on a simplified case which captures the main difficulties: we assume that  $A$  queries **Sam** *along a single path* up to depth  $d = d(n)$ . That is, we assume that  $A$ 's **Sam**-queries  $Q_1, \dots, Q_d$  satisfy  $p(Q_i) = Q_{i-1}$  for every  $2 \leq i \leq d$ . In Subsection 5.3.1 we describe in detail the extension to the more general case. Under this simplifying assumption, we prove the following lemma:

**Lemma 5.9.** *For every  $\pi$ ,  $\text{sign}$  and  $y \in \{0, 1\}^n$ , if*

$$\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \text{SamHIT}_y \wedge \text{Legal}_n \right] \geq \frac{1}{8s(n)} , \quad (5.4)$$

*then*

$$\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ M^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \right] \geq \frac{1}{s(n)^{3d(n)}} .$$

**Proof of Lemma 5.9.** Fix  $\pi$ ,  $\text{sign}$ ,  $y \in \{0, 1\}^n$ , and let  $s = s(n)$ . We introduce the following conventions and notations:

- Without loss of generality, the circuit  $A$  does not query  $\pi$  directly, as any  $\pi$ -query can be replaced by a single **Sam**-query. In order to query  $\pi_m$  on some  $t \in \{0, 1\}^m$ ,  $A$  computes the description of a circuit  $C$  which contains a single  $\pi_m$ -gate with fixed input  $t$ . Then,  $A$  queries **Sam** on  $(1^m, C, \perp, \perp, \perp, \perp)$  that returns  $(w', z', \text{sig}')$  where  $z' = C(w') = \pi_m(t)$ .
- For every  $1 \leq i \leq d$ , we let  $Q_i = (C_{\text{next},i}, C_i, z_i)$  (for simplicity, since we assume that these queries are legal, we can ignore parts of the input and output of **Sam**). In addition, denote by  $(w'_1, z'_1), \dots, (w'_d, z'_d)$  the random variables corresponding to **Sam**'s answers on the queries  $Q_1, \dots, Q_d$ , respectively. Our simplifying assumption implies that for every  $1 \leq i \leq d-1$ , it holds that  $C_{i+1} = C_{\text{next},i}$  and  $z_{i+1} = z'_i$ .
- For every query  $Q_i$ , denote by  $D_i$  the distribution from which **Sam** samples  $w'_i$ . Specifically,  $D_1$  is the uniform distribution over  $\{0, 1\}^m$ , and for every  $2 \leq i \leq d$  the distribution  $D_i$  is

the uniform distribution over the set  $C_i^{-1}(z_i)$  (i.e., over the set of all preimages of  $z_i$  under the mapping defined by the circuit  $C_i$ ). Note that each  $D_i$  is in fact random variable, that depends on the previous queries  $Q_1, \dots, Q_{i-1}$  and on the answer  $w'_{i-1}$  to the query  $Q_{i-1}$ .

- Given a circuit  $C$  and an input  $w$ , we say that  $w$  *produces a  $(C, y)$ -hit* if some  $\pi_n$ -gate in the computation of  $C(w)$  has input  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ .

Throughout the proof, we provide intuitions by considering the interaction between  $A$  and **Sam** as a “game”. This game has  $d$  rounds, where in the  $i$ -th round  $A$  chooses a query  $Q_i = (C_{\text{next},i}, C_i, z_i)$ , and the oracle **Sam** samples  $w'_i$  from the distribution  $D_i$ . The goal of the circuit  $A$  in this game is to come up with a query  $Q_i$  that will produce a  $y$ -hit (i.e., to cause the event **SamHIT** <sub>$y$</sub> ). Formally,

- For every  $2 \leq i \leq d$ , we denote by  $\alpha_i$  the probability that query  $Q_i$  produces a  $y$ -hit, i.e.,

$$\alpha_i = \Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [w'_i \text{ produces a } (C_i, y)\text{-hit}] ,$$

and we also let  $\alpha_1 = 0$  (since  $C_1 = \perp$ ). Note that these  $\alpha_i$ 's are random variables that depend on the queries  $Q_1, \dots, Q_{i-1}$  and on the answer  $w'_{i-1}$  to the query  $Q_{i-1}$ .

- For every  $2 \leq i \leq d$ , we denote by **JUMP** <sub>$i$</sub>  the event that  $\alpha_i > \max \{64s^2\alpha_{i-1}, 1/(64s^2)^{d+1}\}$ , and let **JUMP** =  $\bigcup_i \text{JUMP}_i$ .

Equation 5.4 states that  $A$  has a noticeable probability in producing a  $y$ -hit, and therefore in winning the game. Our first observation is that in this case, the event **JUMP** occurs with noticeable probability. If **JUMP** does not occur, then the  $\alpha_i$ 's are too small in order to produce a  $y$ -hit with noticeable probability.

**Claim 5.10.**  $\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{SamHIT}_y \mid \overline{\text{JUMP}}] \leq 1/(16s)$ .

**Proof.** Assuming that the event **JUMP** does not occur, we prove by induction that for every  $2 \leq i \leq d$  it holds that  $\alpha_i \leq 1/(64s^2)^{d-i+3}$ . The event  $\overline{\text{JUMP}}$  implies that for every  $2 \leq i \leq d$  it holds that  $\alpha_i \leq \max \{64s^2\alpha_{i-1}, 1/(64s^2)^{d+1}\}$ , and therefore

$$\alpha_2 \leq \max \left\{ 64s^2\alpha_1, \frac{1}{(64s^2)^{d+1}} \right\} = \max \left\{ 0, \frac{1}{(64s^2)^{d+1}} \right\} = \frac{1}{(64s^2)^{d+1}} .$$

Suppose now that the claim holds for  $\alpha_{i-1}$ , then

$$\alpha_i \leq \max \left\{ 64s^2\alpha_{i-1}, \frac{1}{(64s^2)^{d+1}} \right\} \leq \max \left\{ 64s^2 \cdot \frac{1}{(64s^2)^{d-(i-1)+3}}, \frac{1}{(64s^2)^{d+1}} \right\} \leq \frac{1}{(64s^2)^{d-i+3}} .$$

In particular, each  $\alpha_i$  is at most  $1/(64s^2)^3$ , thus

$$\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{SamHIT}_y \mid \overline{\text{JUMP}}] \leq d \cdot \frac{1}{(64s^2)^3} \leq s \cdot \frac{1}{(64s^2)^3} \leq \frac{1}{16s} .$$

■

As a result of the previous claim, we can now easily derive that the event **JUMP** has noticeable probability.

**Claim 5.11.**  $\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] \geq 1/(16s)$ .



**Proof.** On one hand, Equation 5.4 implies in particular that

$$\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{SamHIT}_y] \geq \frac{1}{8s} .$$

However, on the other hand, Claim 5.10 implies that

$$\begin{aligned} \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{SamHIT}_y] &\leq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] + \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{SamHIT}_y \mid \overline{\text{JUMP}}] \\ &\leq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] + \frac{1}{16s} . \end{aligned}$$

Therefore,

$$\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] \geq \frac{1}{8s} - \frac{1}{16s} \geq \frac{1}{16s} .$$

■

At this point, we begin considering the point of view of  $M$  in the game. For each query  $Q_i = (C_{\text{next},i}, C_i, z_i)$  with answer  $(w'_i, z'_i)$ , the circuit  $M$  computes  $C_{\text{next},i}(w'_i)$ . If some  $\pi_n$ -gate in this computation has input  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ , then  $M$  outputs  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  and halts. We say that  $M$  wins the game, if it manages to retrieve  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  before  $A$  produces any  $y$ -hits. Formally,

- For every  $1 \leq i \leq d$ , we denote by  $\beta_i$  the probability that  $M$  outputs  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  and halts after query  $Q_i$ , i.e.,

$$\beta_i = \Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [w'_i \text{ produces a } (C_{\text{next},i}, y)\text{-hit}] .$$

Note that these  $\beta_i$ 's are random variables as well, that depend on  $Q_1, \dots, Q_i$ .

The game can be now described as follows: in the  $i$ -th round,  $A$  chooses a query  $Q_i$  which determines  $\beta_i$ , and Sam samples  $w'_i$  which determines  $\alpha_{i+1}$ . If  $Q_i$  chose a high  $\beta_i$ , then  $M$  has high probability in winning the game: given  $w'_i$  from Sam, it will compute  $C_{\text{next},i}(w'_i)$  and halt if it finds  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ . In this case,  $A$  loses the game. Therefore,  $A$  should not choose a high  $\beta_i$ . However, we claim that if  $\beta_i$  is low, then with high probability  $\alpha_{i+1}$  will be low as well. However, if  $\alpha_{i+1}$  is low, then  $A$  has a low probability of producing a  $y$ -hit in the next query  $Q_{i+1}$ . This means that in order for  $A$  to win the game, at some point it must “take a risk” and determine a high  $\beta_i$ .

Formally, the following claim shows that given the queries  $Q_1, \dots, Q_i$ , the expectation of  $\alpha_{i+1}$  over the choice of  $w'_i \leftarrow D_i$  is  $\beta_i$ . Therefore, if  $\beta_i$  is low, then  $\alpha_{i+1}$  will be low as well with high probability. Note that by the definitions of  $\beta_i$  and  $\alpha_{i+1}$ , given  $Q_1, \dots, Q_i$  the probability  $\beta_i$  is already determined, while  $\alpha_{i+1}$  is still a random variable that depends on the answer  $w'_i$  to  $Q_i$ .

**Claim 5.12.** *For every  $1 \leq i \leq d-1$ , given  $\text{hist}_i = (Q_1, \dots, Q_i)$ , it holds that  $\mathbb{E}_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\alpha_{i+1}] = \beta_i$ .*

**Proof.** Given  $\text{hist}_i$ , it holds that

$$\mathbb{E}_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\alpha_{i+1}] = \sum_{z'_i} \Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [z'_i] \cdot \Pr_{w'_{i+1} \leftarrow C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i)} [w'_{i+1} \text{ produces a } (C_{i+1}, y)\text{-hit}] .$$

Note that although  $Q_{i+1}$  is not yet defined, the circuit  $C_{i+1}$  is defined by the restriction  $C_{i+1} = C_{\text{next},i}$ . Now, since  $z'_i = C_{\text{next},i}(w'_i) = C_{i+1}(w'_i)$ , and  $C_{\text{next},i}$  is a refinement of  $C_i$ , then we have that

$$\Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [z'_i] = \frac{|C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i)|}{|C_i^{-1}(z_i)|} ,$$

and that

$$\Pr_{w'_{i+1} \leftarrow C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i)} [w'_{i+1} \text{ produces a } (C_{i+1}, y)\text{-hit}] = \frac{|\{w \in C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i) : w \text{ produces a } (C_{i+1}, y)\text{-hit}\}|}{|C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i)|} .$$

Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbb{E}_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\alpha_{i+1}] &= \sum_{z'_i} \frac{|C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i)|}{|C_i^{-1}(z_i)|} \cdot \frac{|\{w \in C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i) : w \text{ produces a } (C_{i+1}, y)\text{-hit}\}|}{|C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i)|} \\ &= \sum_{z'_i} \frac{|\{w \in C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i) : w \text{ produces a } (C_{i+1}, y)\text{-hit}\}|}{|C_i^{-1}(z_i)|} . \end{aligned}$$

Finally, the restrictions that  $C_{i+1} = C_{\text{next},i}$  and that  $C_{\text{next},i}$  is a refinement of  $C_i$  imply that

$$C_i^{-1}(z_i) = \bigsqcup_{z'_i} C_{\text{next},i}^{-1}(z'_i) = \bigsqcup_{z'_i} C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i) ,$$

where  $\bigsqcup$  denotes the union of disjoint sets. Thus,

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbb{E}_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\alpha_{i+1}] &= \frac{|\{w \in \bigsqcup_{z'_i} C_{i+1}^{-1}(z'_i) : w \text{ produces a } (C_{i+1}, y)\text{-hit}\}|}{|C_i^{-1}(z_i)|} \\ &= \frac{|\{w \in C_i^{-1}(z_i) : w \text{ produces a } (C_{\text{next},i}, y)\text{-hit}\}|}{|C_i^{-1}(z_i)|} \\ &= \Pr_{w \leftarrow C_i^{-1}(z_i)} [w \text{ produces a } (C_{\text{next},i}, y)\text{-hit}] \\ &= \Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [w'_i \text{ produces a } (C_{\text{next},i}, y)\text{-hit}] \\ &= \beta_i . \end{aligned}$$

■

Up to this point, we have reached the conclusion that in order for  $A$  to win the game, it must be that at least one of the  $\alpha_{i+1}$ 's is high (i.e., the event  $\text{JUMP}_{i+1}$  occurs). We have also seen that the latter requires  $A$  to choose a query  $Q_i$  that determines a high  $\beta_i$ . We would like to claim that in this case, it holds that  $\beta_i$  is significantly larger than  $\alpha_i$ . Formally,

- For every  $1 \leq i \leq d$ , denote by  $\text{GAP}_i$  the event that  $\beta_i > \max\{2\alpha_i, 1/(64s^2)^{d+2}\}$ .

The following claim captures the idea that if  $\beta_i$  is not significantly larger than  $\alpha_i$ , then  $\alpha_{i+1}$  is not significantly larger than  $\alpha_i$  as well.

**Claim 5.13.** *For every  $1 \leq i \leq d-1$ , given  $\text{hist}_i = (Q_1, \dots, Q_i)$ , it holds that*

$$\Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\text{JUMP}_{i+1} \mid \overline{\text{GAP}_i}] \leq 1/(32s^2) .$$

**Proof.** Given  $\text{hist}_i = (Q_1, \dots, Q_i)$ , it holds that

$$\begin{aligned} &\Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\text{JUMP}_{i+1} \mid \overline{\text{GAP}_i}] \\ &\leq \Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\alpha_{i+1} > 32s^2\beta_i] + \Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\text{JUMP}_{i+1} \mid \overline{\text{GAP}_i} \wedge \{\alpha_{i+1} \leq 32s^2\beta_i\}] . \end{aligned}$$

Claim 5.12 and Markov's inequality imply that

$$\Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\alpha_{i+1} > 32s^2\beta_i] \leq \frac{1}{32s^2} .$$

In addition, note that the events  $\text{JUMP}_{i+1}$  and  $\text{GAP}_i$  were defined such that

$$\Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\text{JUMP}_{i+1} \mid \overline{\text{GAP}}_i \wedge \{\alpha_{i+1} \leq 32s^2\beta_i\}] = 0 .$$

Therefore,

$$\Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\text{JUMP}_{i+1} \mid \overline{\text{GAP}}_i] \leq \frac{1}{32s^2} .$$

■

The following claim combines the above observations, and shows that with noticeable probability there must be an  $i$  such that  $\text{JUMP}_{i+1}$  occurs and for every such  $i$  it holds that  $\text{GAP}_i$  occurs as well. In other words, if  $A$  wins the game with noticeable probability, then there must be some  $i$  for which  $\alpha_{i+1}$  is high, and for every such  $i$  it is the case that  $A$  chooses  $Q_i$  such that  $\beta_i$  is significantly larger than  $\alpha_i$ . These high  $\beta_i$ 's will enable  $M$  to retrieve  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  and win the game, before  $A$  produces any  $y$ -hits.

**Claim 5.14.**  $\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP} \wedge (\bigcap_{i=1}^{d-1} \{\text{GAP}_i \vee \overline{\text{JUMP}}_{i+1}\})] \geq 1/(32s)$ .

**Proof.** Claims 5.11 and 5.13 imply that

$$\begin{aligned} & \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ \text{JUMP} \wedge \left( \bigcap_{i=1}^{d-1} \{\text{GAP}_i \vee \overline{\text{JUMP}}_{i+1}\} \right) \right] \\ & \geq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] - \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ \bigcup_{i=1}^{d-1} \{\overline{\text{GAP}}_i \wedge \text{JUMP}_{i+1}\} \right] \\ & \geq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] - \sum_{i=1}^{d-1} \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\overline{\text{GAP}}_i \wedge \text{JUMP}_{i+1}] \\ & \geq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] - \sum_{i=1}^{d-1} \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}_{i+1} \mid \overline{\text{GAP}}_i] \\ & \geq \frac{1}{16s} - s \cdot \frac{1}{32s^2} \\ & = \frac{1}{32s} . \end{aligned}$$

■

Denote by  $\text{GOOD}$  the event that  $\text{JUMP}$  occurs, and for every  $\text{JUMP}_{i+1}$  that occurs it holds that  $\text{GAP}_i$  occurs as well (this is the event considered in Claim 5.14). Assume now that  $\text{GOOD}$  occurs, and denote by  $i^*$  the minimal  $1 \leq i \leq d-1$  for which  $\text{JUMP}_{i+1}$  occurs. The probability that the query  $Q_{i^*}$  does not produce a  $y$ -hit, but  $M$  still retrieves  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$  using the answer to this query is at least  $\beta_{i^*} - \alpha_{i^*}$ . Since  $\text{GAP}_{i^*}$  occurs, we know that  $\beta_{i^*} - \alpha_{i^*}$  is noticeable, and therefore  $M$  has a noticeable probability in winning the game at this point. Yet, it might be the case that some previous query produces a  $y$ -hit. This event has low probability, since  $i^*$  is minimal such  $\text{JUMP}_{i^*+1}$  occurs, and therefore all the previous  $\alpha_i$ 's are not sufficiently high in order to produce a  $y$ -hit. The following claim concludes the proof of Lemma 5.9.

**Claim 5.15.**  $\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ M^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \right] \geq 1/(s^{3d})$ .

**Proof.** Given that the event GOOD occurs, denote by  $i^*$  the minimal  $1 \leq i \leq d-1$  for which  $\text{JUMP}_{i+1}$  occurs (as discussed above). For this  $i^*$ , the event  $\text{GAP}_{i^*}$  occurs as well and for every query  $Q_i$  that precedes  $Q_{i^*}$  the event  $\text{JUMP}_{i+1}$  does not occur. Therefore, whenever the event GOOD occurs, we can hope that the following (independent) events will take place:

- None of the queries  $Q_1, \dots, Q_{i^*-1}$  will produce a  $y$ -hit. Since for every such query  $Q_i$  the event  $\text{JUMP}_i$  does not occur, then, exactly as in the proof of Claim 5.10, the probability of this event is at least  $1 - 1/(16s)$ .
- Given  $Q_{i^*}$ , Sam samples  $w'_{i^*}$  which does not produce a  $(C_{i^*}, y)$ -hit, but does produce a  $(C_{\text{next}, i^*}, y)$ -hit. In other words, the query  $Q_{i^*}$  does not produce a  $y$ -hit, but still  $M$  retrieves the value  $\pi_n^{-1}(y)$ . The probability of this event is at least

$$\beta_{i^*} - \alpha_{i^*} \geq \frac{\beta_{i^*}}{2} \geq \frac{1}{2(64s^2)^{d+2}}.$$

Putting these together, we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ M^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \right] &\geq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}}[\text{GOOD}] \cdot \left(1 - \frac{1}{16s}\right) \cdot \frac{1}{2(64s^2)^{d+2}} \\ &\geq \frac{1}{32s} \cdot \left(1 - \frac{1}{16s}\right) \cdot \frac{1}{2(64s^2)^{d+2}} \\ &\geq \frac{1}{s^{3d}}. \end{aligned}$$

■

This concludes the proof of Lemma 5.9. We now turn to complete the proof of Lemma 5.4. Recall that we were left to deal with the case that

$$\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \text{SamHIT}_y \wedge \text{Legal}_n \right] \geq \frac{1}{4s(n)}.$$

Let

$$T = \left\{ (y, \pi, \text{sign}) : \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ A^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \text{SamHIT}_y \wedge \text{Legal}_n \right] \geq \frac{1}{8s(n)} \right\}.$$

Then

$$\Pr_{y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n, \pi, \text{sign}} [(y, \pi, \text{sign}) \in T] \geq 1/8s(n),$$

and Lemma 5.9 implies that for every  $(y, \pi, \text{sign}) \in T$  we have

$$\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ M^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \right] \geq \frac{1}{s(n)^{3d(n)}}.$$

Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} &\Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ M^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \right] \\ &\geq \Pr_{\substack{\pi, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} [(y, \pi, \text{sign}) \in T] \cdot \Pr_{\substack{\pi, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign} \\ y \leftarrow \{0,1\}^n}} \left[ M^{\pi, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\pi, \mathcal{F}}}(y) = \pi_n^{-1}(y) \wedge \overline{\text{SamHIT}}_y \mid (y, \pi, \text{sign}) \in T \right] \\ &\geq \frac{1}{8s(n)} \cdot \frac{1}{s(n)^{3d(n)}} \\ &\geq \frac{1}{s(n)^{3d(n)+2}}. \end{aligned}$$

■

### 5.3.1 Dealing with a general query structure

We describe the extension of the above proof of Lemma 5.9 to the case where  $A$ 's queries with security parameter at least  $1^n$  are not necessarily along a single path. In general, these queries may form a forest structure, as discussed above and in Section 3 (i.e., each query  $Q_j$  is either a root-query, or there exists a query  $Q_i$  such that  $i = p(j)$ ). This extension is mainly technical, and essentially does not require anything more than refining some events and notations.

Consider the random variables  $Q_1, \dots, Q_q$  corresponding to  $A$ 's Sam-queries with security parameter at least  $1^n$ . As in the above proof, we can assume that these are all legal queries, and ignore all the queries with security parameters less than  $1^n$  – this part of the proof does not change at all. However, whereas in the simplified version of the proof, the parent query of each  $Q_i$  was  $Q_{i-1}$  (i.e.,  $p(i) = i - 1$ ), when considering an arbitrary forest structure of the queries, the values  $p(i)$  are random variables as well.

We deal with this issue by utilizing the following observation: Assume that  $Q_i$  and  $Q_j$  are two queries such that  $p(j) = i$ . Then, the probability  $\alpha_j$  that  $Q_j$  produces a  $y$ -hit is already determined given the query  $Q_i = (C_{\text{next},i}, C_i, z_i)$  and its answer  $(w'_i, z'_i)$ . Indeed, the forest structure guarantees that any such  $Q_j$  is of the form  $(C_{\text{next},j}, C_j, z_j)$  where  $C_j = C_{\text{next},i}$  and  $z_j = z'_i$ . Therefore, by the definition of the distribution  $D_j$  we have that the probability that  $Q_j$  produces a  $y$ -hit is

$$\begin{aligned} \alpha_j &= \Pr_{w'_j \leftarrow D_j} [w'_j \text{ produces a } (C_j, y)\text{-hit}] \\ &= \Pr_{w'_j \leftarrow C_j^{-1}(z_j)} [w'_j \text{ produces a } (C_j, y)\text{-hit}] \\ &= \Pr_{w'_j \leftarrow C_{\text{next},i}^{-1}(z'_i)} [w'_j \text{ produces a } (C_{\text{next},i}, y)\text{-hit}] . \end{aligned}$$

It is now clear that  $\alpha_j$  can be defined even before the query  $Q_j$  is determined (assuming of course that  $p(j) = i$ ). We formally capture this property as follows:

- For every  $1 \leq i \leq q$ , we denote by  $\gamma_i$  the probability that a potential child of  $Q_i = (C_{\text{next},i}, C_i, z_i)$  produces a  $y$ -hit, i.e.,

$$\gamma_i = \Pr_{w'_j \leftarrow C_{\text{next},i}^{-1}(z'_i)} [w'_j \text{ produces a } (C_{\text{next},i}, y)\text{-hit}] ,$$

Note that these  $\gamma_i$ 's are random variables which are determined given the query  $Q_i$  and its answer  $(w'_i, z'_i)$ . Then, for every two queries  $Q_i$  and  $Q_j$  such that  $p(j) = i$ , we have that  $\alpha_j = \gamma_i$ .

- For every  $1 \leq i \leq q$ , we denote by  $\text{PJUMP}_i$  (for “Potential JUMP”) the event in which the probability that a potential child of  $Q_i$  hits  $y$  is significantly larger than the probability that  $Q_i$  hits  $y$ . Specifically, it is the event that  $\gamma_i > \max \{64s^2\alpha_i, 1/(64s^2)^{d+1}\}$ . Then, for every two queries  $Q_i$  and  $Q_j$  such that  $p(j) = i$ , we have that the events  $\text{JUMP}_j$  and  $\text{PJUMP}_i$  are equivalent.

We now describe in detail the required technical changes to the proof of Lemma 5.9. The new proof begins as before by proving that  $\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{SamHIT}_y \mid \overline{\text{JUMP}}] \leq 1/(16s)$  and that  $\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] \geq 1/(16s)$ . In these two proofs the new definitions are not yet relevant and the only change is the usage of the notation  $p(i)$  instead of  $i - 1$ . Then, Claims 5.12 and 5.13 are replaced with showing that  $\mathbb{E}_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\gamma_i] = \beta_i$ , and that  $\Pr_{w'_i \leftarrow D_i} [\text{PJUMP}_i \mid \overline{\text{GAP}}_i] \leq 1/(32s^2)$ . Again, these are the exact

same proofs, where  $\gamma_i$  replaces  $\alpha_{i+1}$ . The final change is in Claim 5.14, which is replaced by showing that  $\Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ \text{JUMP} \wedge \left( \bigcap_j \{ \text{GAP}_{p(j)} \vee \overline{\text{JUMP}}_j \} \right) \right] \geq 1/(32s)$ , as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
& \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ \text{JUMP} \wedge \left( \bigcap_j \{ \text{GAP}_{p(j)} \vee \overline{\text{JUMP}}_j \} \right) \right] \\
& \geq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] - \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ \bigcup_j \{ \overline{\text{GAP}}_{p(j)} \wedge \text{JUMP}_j \} \right] \\
& \geq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] - \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} \left[ \bigcup_i \{ \overline{\text{GAP}}_i \wedge \text{PJUMP}_i \} \right] \\
& \geq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] - \sum_i \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\overline{\text{GAP}}_i \wedge \text{PJUMP}_i] \\
& \geq \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{JUMP}] - \sum_i \Pr_{\mathcal{F}} [\text{PJUMP}_i \mid \overline{\text{GAP}}_i] \\
& \geq \frac{1}{16s} - s \cdot \frac{1}{32s^2} \\
& = \frac{1}{32s} .
\end{aligned}$$

## 6 The Round Complexity Lower Bound

In this section we combine the results presented in Sections 4 and 5 and derive our main theorem. As described in Subsection 1.2, given a fully-black-box construction of a statistically-hiding commitment scheme from a family of trapdoor permutations, we consider three parameters:

1.  $d(n)$  – the number of communication rounds in the commitment scheme with security parameter  $1^n$ .
2.  $s(n)$  – the hardness of the trapdoor permutation family (see Definition 2.3).
3.  $\ell(n)$  – the security parameter expansion of the construction (see Definition 2.7).

We first state our result for the more standard hardness notion of trapdoor permutations, in which we consider a family of trapdoor permutations which is  $s(n)$ -hard for any polynomial  $s(n)$ . As discussed in Subsection 1.2, we consider both constructions which are security-preserving (i.e.,  $\ell(n) = O(n)$ ), and constructions which are not necessarily security-preserving (i.e.,  $\ell(n)$  is any polynomial in  $n$ ). We begin by formally stating our results for these two cases.

**Theorem 6.1.** *Any  $O(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding fully-black-box construction of a weakly-binding and statistically-hiding commitment scheme from a family of trapdoor permutations has  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  communication rounds.*

**Theorem 6.2.** *Any fully-black-box construction of a weakly-binding and statistically-hiding commitment scheme from a family of trapdoor permutations has  $n^{\Omega(1)}$  communication rounds.*



The above two theorems are in fact obtained as corollaries of a more general statement. In this statement we specifically consider the notion of  $s(n)$ -hard trapdoor permutations, and do not consider a particular range for the security parameter expansion  $\ell(n)$ . The main theorem of the paper is formally stated as follows:

**Theorem 6.3 (Main Theorem).** *For every  $\ell(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding fully-black-box construction of a  $d(n)$ -round weakly-binding and statistically-hiding commitment scheme from an  $s(n)$ -hard family of trapdoor permutations, it holds that  $d(\ell(n)) = \Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log s(n)}\right)$ .*

Before turning to the formal proof of Theorem 6.3, we first provide a very brief overview. Given an  $\ell(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding fully-black-box construction  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V}, A)$  of a  $d(n)$ -round weakly-binding statistically-hiding commitment scheme from an  $s(n)$ -hard family of trapdoor permutations, we show that there exists an oracle  $\mathcal{O} = \left(\tau, \text{Sam}_{\text{depth}}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}\right)$  relative to which the following holds: there exists a malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  that breaks the binding of the scheme  $(\mathcal{S}^\tau, \mathcal{R}^\tau, \mathcal{V}^\tau)$ , but if  $d(\ell(n)) < \frac{c \cdot n}{\log s(n)}$  for some particular constant  $c > 0$ , then the machine  $A$  fails to break the security of  $\tau$ . A technical difficulty is that the results proved in Sections 4 and 5 hold with respect to a *distribution* of oracles and not for a *single* oracle (they hold over the random choices of  $\tau$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$  and  $\text{sign}$ ). An application of the Borel-Cantelli lemma will enable us to overcome this difficulty. In order to apply the Borel-Cantelli lemma, we need the following statement, which is an immediate corollary of Theorem 4.1 via a standard averaging argument:

**Corollary 6.4.** *For every  $d(n)$ -round statistically-hiding bit-commitment scheme  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V})$  with oracle access to a family of trapdoor permutations, there exist a polynomial-time malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  and a negligible function  $\nu(n)$ , such that for all sufficiently large  $n$  with probability at least  $1 - 1/n^2$  over the choices of  $\tau$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$  and  $\text{sign}$ , it holds that*

$$\Pr_{r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ \begin{array}{l} ((\text{decom}, \text{decom}') | \text{com}) \leftarrow \left\langle \mathcal{S}^* \text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}(1^n), \mathcal{R}^\tau(1^n, r_{\mathcal{R}}) \right\rangle : \\ \mathcal{V}^\tau(\text{com}, \text{decom}) = 0, \mathcal{V}^\tau(\text{com}, \text{decom}') = 1 \end{array} \right] > 1 - \nu(n) .$$

We now turn to formally prove Theorem 6.3.

**Proof of Theorem 6.3.** Let  $(\mathcal{S}, \mathcal{R}, \mathcal{V}, A)$  be an  $\ell(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding fully-black-box construction of a  $d(n)$ -round weakly-binding statistically-hiding commitment scheme from an  $s(n)$ -hard family of trapdoor permutations. From this point on, we fix the depth restriction function  $\text{depth} : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$  of the oracle  $\text{Sam}$  to be the function  $d(n) + 1$ . For every  $\tau$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$  and  $\text{sign}$ , we denote by  $E_n^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}$  the event in which

$$\Pr_{r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ \begin{array}{l} ((\text{decom}, \text{decom}') | \text{com}) \leftarrow \left\langle \mathcal{S}^* \text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}(1^n), \mathcal{R}^\tau(1^n, r_{\mathcal{R}}) \right\rangle : \\ \mathcal{V}^\tau(\text{com}, \text{decom}) = 0, \mathcal{V}^\tau(\text{com}, \text{decom}') = 1 \end{array} \right] \leq 1 - \nu(n) ,$$

where  $\mathcal{S}^*$  and  $\nu(n)$  are given by Corollary 6.4. Then, Corollary 6.4 states that for all sufficiently large  $n$ , it holds that  $\Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}} \left[ E_n^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}} \right] \leq 1/n^2$ , and thus

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \Pr_{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}} \left[ E_n^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}} \right] < \infty .$$

Therefore, the Borel-Cantelli lemma implies that the probability over the choices of  $\tau$ ,  $\mathcal{F}$  and  $\text{sign}$  that the event  $E_n^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}$  occurs for infinitely many  $n$ 's is zero. That is, for measure 1 of the oracles  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}$  it holds that

$$\Pr_{r_{\mathcal{R}}} \left[ \begin{array}{c} ((\text{decom}, \text{decom}') | \text{com}) \leftarrow \left\langle \mathcal{S}^* \text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}(1^n), \mathcal{R}^{\tau}(1^n, r_{\mathcal{R}}) \right\rangle : \\ \mathcal{V}^{\tau}(\text{com}, \text{decom}) = 0, \mathcal{V}^{\tau}(\text{com}, \text{decom}') = 1 \end{array} \right] > 1 - \nu(n) ,$$

for all sufficiently large  $n$ . In other words, relative to measure 1 of the oracles  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}$ , the malicious sender  $\mathcal{S}^*$  breaks the weak binding of the commitment scheme. Thus, the fully-black-box construction guarantees that relative to these oracles, we have that

$$\Pr \left[ A^{\tau, \mathcal{S}^* \text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(1^n, G_n(td), y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \right] > \frac{1}{s(n)} , \quad (6.1)$$

for infinitely many values of  $n$ , where  $A$  runs in time  $s(n)$ , and the probability is taken uniformly over all the possible choices of  $td \in \{0, 1\}^n$  and  $y \in \{0, 1\}^n$ , and over all the possible outcomes of the internal coin tosses of  $A$ . Note that since Equation 6.1 holds with respect to measure 1 of the oracles  $\text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}$  (i.e., with probability 1 over the choice of  $\tau, \mathcal{F}$  and  $\text{sign}$ ), then Equation 6.1 still holds when the probability is taken over the choices of  $\tau, \mathcal{F}$  and  $\text{sign}$  as well. In addition, by converting the Turing-machine  $A$  to a circuit family, and by incorporating the description of  $\mathcal{S}^*$  into this family, we obtain that there exists a circuit  $A^*$  of size at most, say,  $s^*(n) = (s(n))^2$  such that

$$\Pr_{\substack{td \leftarrow \{0, 1\}^n, \tau, \mathcal{F} \\ y \leftarrow \{0, 1\}^n, \text{sign}}} \left[ A^*{}^{\tau, \text{Sam}_{d+1}^{\tau, \mathcal{F}, \text{sign}}}(G_n(td), y) = F_n^{-1}(td, y) \right] > \frac{1}{s(n)} > \frac{2}{s^*(n)} ,$$

for infinitely many values of  $n$ .

The assumption that the construction is  $\ell(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding (i.e., that  $A$  when given security parameter  $1^n$  invokes  $\mathcal{S}^*$  on security parameters which are at most  $1^{\ell(n)}$ ), guarantees that  $A$  uses  $\mathcal{S}^*$  in a way such that  $\text{Sam}$  is queried up to depth at most  $d(\ell(n)) + 1$ . This means that also the circuit  $A^*$  queries  $\text{Sam}$  up to depth at most  $d(\ell(n)) + 1$ .

We conclude the proof by observing that if  $s^*(n)^{3d(\ell(n))+2} < 2^{n/8}$ , then the existence of the circuit  $A^*$  contradicts Theorem 5.5, and therefore  $s^*(n)^{3d(\ell(n))+2} \geq 2^{n/8}$ , i.e.,  $d(\ell(n)) = \Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log s(n)}\right)$ . ■

## 7 Implications to Other Cryptographic Protocols

Our lower bound on the round complexity of statistical commitment schemes implies similar lower bounds for several other cryptographic protocols. Our result can be extended to any cryptographic protocol which can be used to construct a weakly-binding statistically-hiding commitment scheme in a fully-black-box manner. Specifically, in this section we derive new lower bounds on the round complexity of single-server private information retrieval, interactive hashing, and oblivious transfer that guarantees statistical security for one of the parties. We state the corollaries in this section for construction that are security preserving (i.e.,  $O(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding) and note that more general statements, as in Theorem 6.3, could be easily derived as well.

We note that our lower bound proof for statistically-hiding commitment schemes did not rely on any malicious behavior of the receiver (see Section 4). Therefore, our lower bound holds also for schemes in which the receiver is assumed to be semi-honest. The following paragraphs refer to

reductions from several protocols to commitment schemes. All these reductions carry through to weakly-binding statistically-hiding commitment schemes with a semi-honest receiver.<sup>12</sup>

## 7.1 Single-Server Private Information Retrieval

A single-server private information retrieval (PIR) scheme [9] is a protocol between a server and a user. The server holds a database  $x \in \{0, 1\}^n$ , and the user holds an index  $i \in [n]$  to an entry of the database. Informally, the user wishes to retrieve the  $i$ -th entry of the database, without revealing to the server the value  $i$ . A naive solution is to have the user download the entire database, however, the total communication complexity of this solution is  $n$  bits. Based on specific number-theoretic assumptions, several schemes with sublinear communication complexity were developed (see [6, 8, 17, 43, 40], and a recent survey by Ostrovsky and Skeith [51]). The only non-trivial construction based on general computational assumptions is due to Kushilevitz and Ostrovsky [41]. Assuming the existence of trapdoor permutations, they constructed an interactive protocol whose communication complexity is  $n - o(n)$  bits.

Beimel, Ishai, Kushilevitz and Malkin [2] showed that any single-server PIR protocol with communication complexity of at most  $n/2$  bits, can be used to construct a weakly-binding statistically-hiding commitment scheme. Their construction is both fully-black-box and preserves the number of rounds. Thus, by combining this with our result, we obtain the following corollary:

**Corollary 7.1.** *Any  $O(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding fully-black-box construction of a single-server PIR protocol for an  $n$ -bit database from a family of trapdoor permutations, in which the server communicates less than  $n/2$  bits, has  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  communication rounds.*

Corollary 7.1 yields in particular a lower bound on the communication complexity: Any such construction requires the server to communicate  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  bits. In a subsequent work [29], we manage to extend this result to a lower bound of  $\Omega(n)$ , which asymptotically matches the upper bound of [41].

## 7.2 Interactive Hashing

Interactive hashing was introduced by Naor, Ostrovsky, Venkatesan and Yung [47] and is a protocol that allows a sender  $\mathcal{S}$  to commit to a value  $y$  while only revealing to the receiver  $\mathcal{R}$  the value  $(h, z = h(y))$ , where  $h$  is a 2-to-1 hash function chosen interactively during the protocol.<sup>13</sup> The two security properties of interactive hashing are binding ( $\mathcal{S}$  is bounded by the protocol to producing at most one value of  $y$  which is consistent with the transcript) and hiding ( $\mathcal{R}$  does not obtain any information about  $y$ , except for  $h(y)$ ). Naor et al. constructed an interactive hashing protocol from any one-way permutation with  $O\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  communication rounds, and showed that it implies in a fully-black-box manner a statistical commitment scheme with the same number of rounds.<sup>14</sup> Wee [59] has recently showed that a restricted class of fully-black-box constructions of interactive hashing from one-way permutations has  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  rounds. Our result extends Wee's lower bound both to include the most general form of such constructions, and to trapdoor permutations.

<sup>12</sup>For private information retrieval – the user may be semi-honest, for interactive hashing – the receiver, and for oblivious transfer – the side which is not statistically protected.

<sup>13</sup>Several extensions to this definition were suggested, see [31, 50].

<sup>14</sup>Although the original proof in [47] showed the result for  $O(n)$  rounds, this was recently reduced to  $O\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  rounds [31, 39].

**Corollary 7.2.** *Any  $O(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding fully-black-box construction of an interactive hashing protocol from a family of trapdoor permutations has  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  communication rounds.*

### 7.3 Oblivious Transfer

Oblivious transfer (OT), introduced by Rabin [52], is a fundamental primitive in cryptography. In particular, it was shown to imply secure multiparty computation [25, 36, 61]. OT has several equivalent formulations, and we consider the formulation of  $\binom{2}{1}$ -OT, defined by Even, Goldreich and Lempel [12].  $\binom{2}{1}$ -OT is a protocol between two parties, a sender and a receiver. The sender’s input consists of two secret bits  $b_0, b_1$ , and the receiver’s input consists of a value  $i \in \{0, 1\}$ . At the end of the protocol, the receiver should learn the bit  $b_i$  while the sender does not learn the value  $i$ . The security of the protocol guarantees that even a cheating receiver should not be able to learn the bit  $b_{1-i}$ , and a cheating sender should not be able to learn  $i$ .

Given any  $\binom{2}{1}$ -OT protocol that guarantees statistical security for one of the parties (sender or receiver), one can construct a weakly-binding statistically-hiding commitment scheme in a fully-black-box manner while preserving the number of rounds. For the explicit reduction from a statistically protected sender see [13], and the reduction from a statistically protected receiver follows similar lines.<sup>15</sup> Thus, by combining this with our result, we obtain the following corollary:

**Corollary 7.3.** *Any  $O(n)$ -security-parameter-expanding fully-black-box construction of a  $\binom{2}{1}$ -OT protocol that guarantees statistical security for one of the parties from a family of trapdoor permutations has  $\Omega\left(\frac{n}{\log n}\right)$  communication rounds.*

We stress that there exist constructions of semi-honest receiver  $\binom{2}{1}$ -OT protocols, relying on specific number-theoretic assumptions, where the sender enjoys statistical security with a constant number of rounds (e.g., Aiello et al. [1] and Naor and Pinkas [48]). Hence, as for statistical commitments, we demonstrate a large gap between the round complexity of OT constructions based on general assumptions and OT constructions based on specific number-theoretic assumptions.

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<sup>15</sup>Alternatively, refer to [60] for switching the roles of the sender and the receiver.

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